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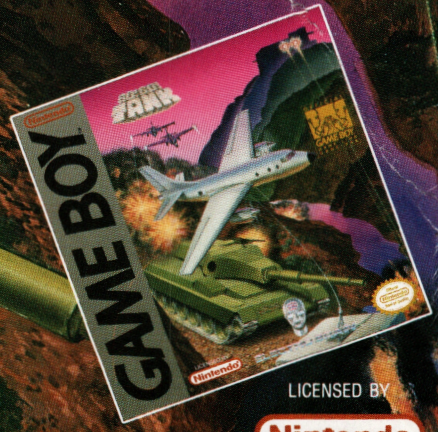

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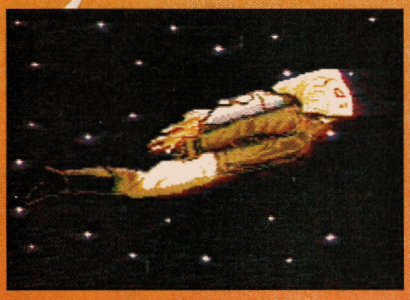

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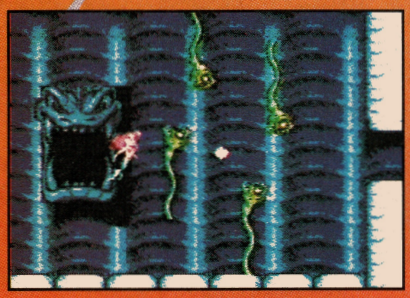

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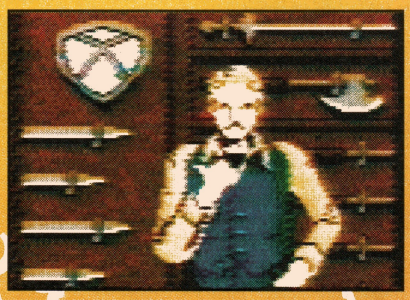

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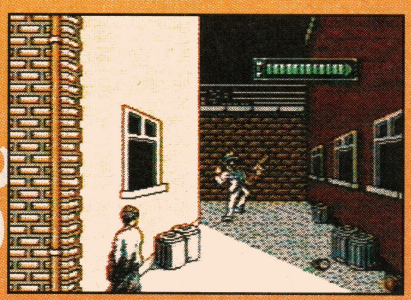

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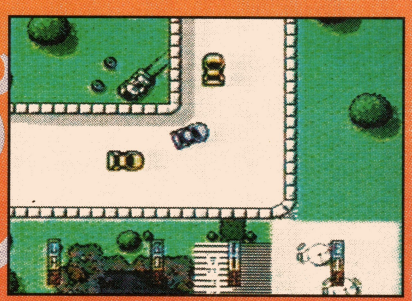

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MPA

EDITOR'S NOTES

There's no other genre of NES games growing as quickly as role-playing adventures. The days when strategy-game fans had only the *Zelda* games to choose from are long gone, and now many licensees are trying to release even bigger and better role-playing games (RPGs).

If you haven't yet tackled an RPG because you don't know where to start, our August issue will be of interest to you. And if you're already an RPG fanatic, this magazine is right up your alley. "Adventuring, Nintendo-Style" takes a look at some of the best RPGs now on the market, and "Role-Playing Roundup" checks out the games that are just being released or are planned for the near future, not only for NES, but for Super NES and Game Boy, too. From *Dragon Warrior III* to *Uninvited*, we've got the latest news.

The Bard's Tale, FCI's most recent release, is reviewed in our Super Strategy section, and we've included hint-filled evaluations of games based on the movies *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* and *The Untouchables*. If movies are your thing, check out our feature on *The Rocketeer*. We've got a behind-the-scenes view of the movie as well as a guide to Bandai's videogame version.

The Little Mermaid, from Capcom, is also featured in this issue. This game is unique because it is the first NES adventure specifically aimed at girls (*Barbie*, another game for girls, is in development by Hi Tech Expressions). While Capcom and our editors think *The Little Mermaid* can be enjoyed by boys as well as girls, it's good to see this segment of the playing audience — long neglected by developers — finally getting some attention.

Leslie Mizell
Associate Editor

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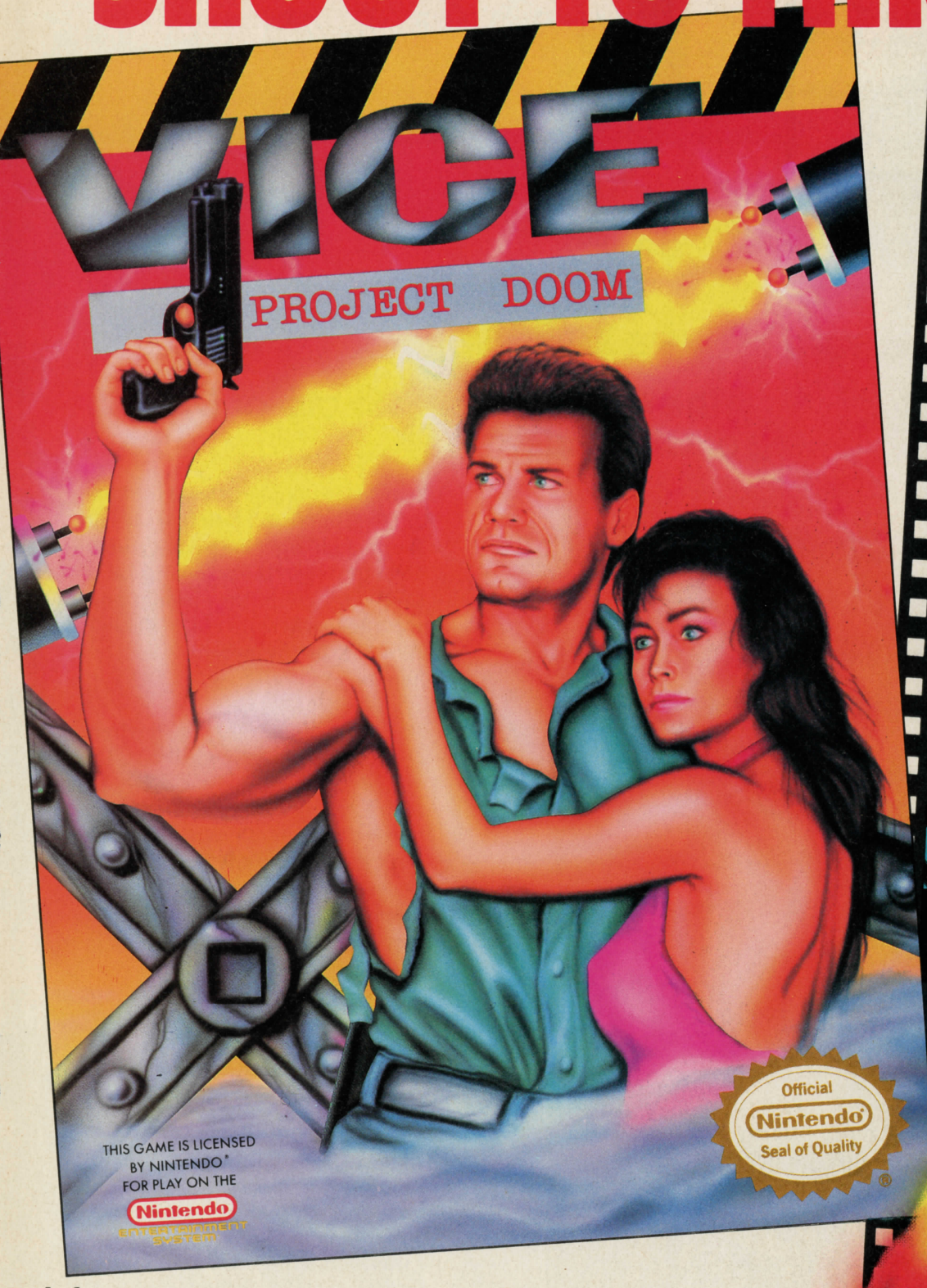

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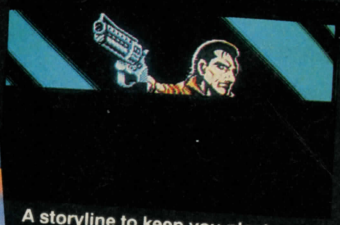

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The Legend of Zelda

In *The Legend of Zelda*, how do you get the magic stick? I have the Book of Magic already.

Joshua
Clay, NY

Look for the magic wand *in Labyrinth Six. You must defeat everyone in the room before you'll see the hidden chamber where the wand is located.*

The Battle of Olympus

In the game *Battle of Olympus*, I can't seem to break the barrier to get the second fragment of love. I can't find the key, either.

Joseph
Canonsburg, PA

You can get the key from Kelos in Attica. Use the key to break the barrier and the second fragment of love is yours.

Skate or Die 2

I can get to the fourth level in *Skate or Die 2*, but I can't beat it. It says in the manual to get the permit and to go to the top of the warehouse and save C.J. I got to the elevator and went up to where it's red, but I can't find C.J. or the permit. Can you help me?

Seviren
New Albany, IN

Make a map of the warehouse and map each floor. Be sure to mark the locations of power-ups. If you don't map the area, you won't survive long enough to make a thorough search. By checking carefully on every level, you should uncover both the permit and C.J.

Mega Man 3

Instead of using the Rush Coil when you're in a jam that you need to get out of *fast*, simply press and hold Right on Controller 2 while pressing Jump on Controller 1. You'll have a super-high mega-jump.

Clay
Ventura, CA

Thanks for the tip, Clay!

IronSword

In *IronSword: Wizards and Warriors II*, could you please tell me exactly where to find the Blight-water spell?

Joe
Dexter, MI

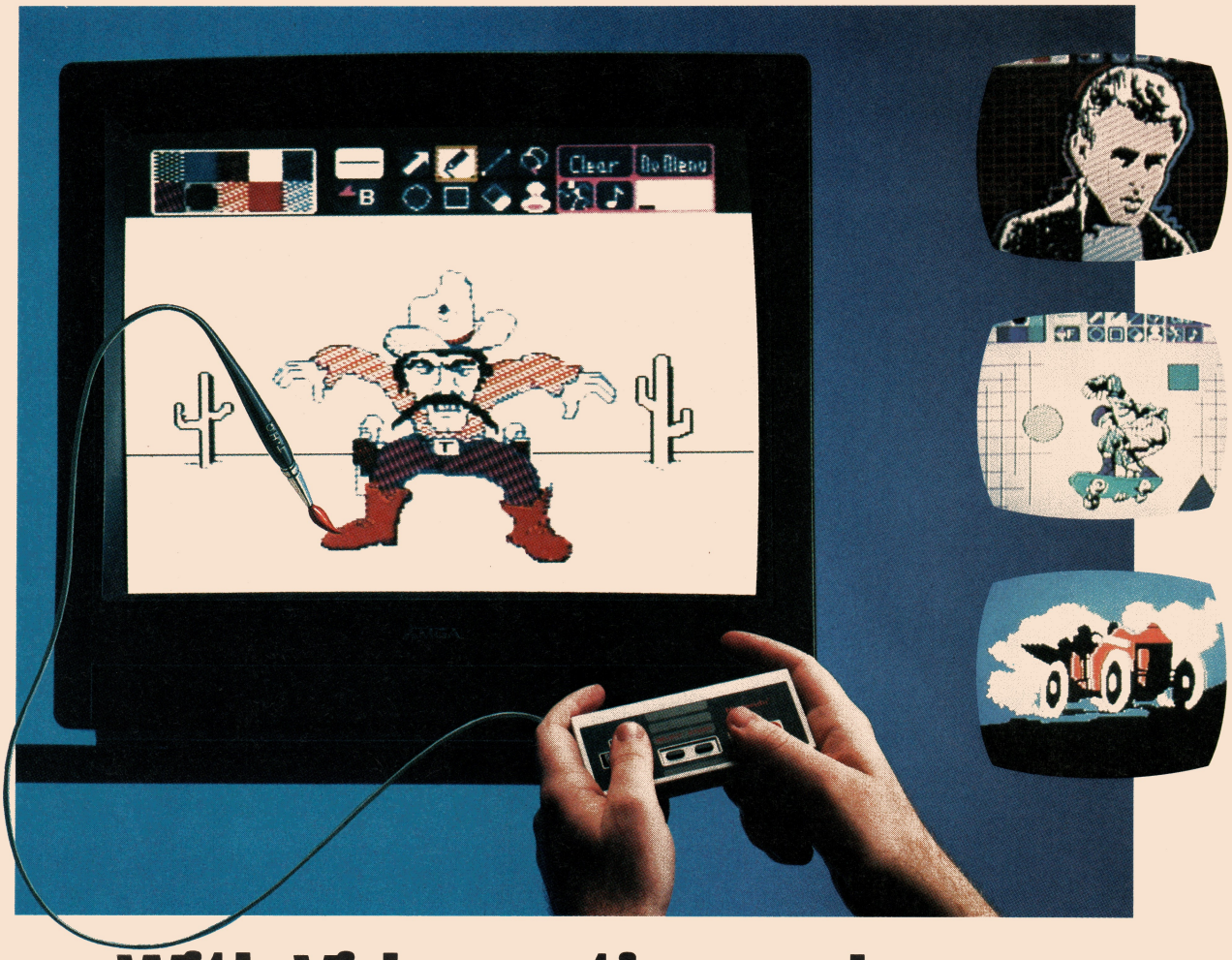
Go down to the bottom of the waterfall. Eventually, you'll find an open area to the left, but there will be a wall in the way. Walk through a hidden passageway near the middle of the wall to enter the room and find the spell.

The Black Bass

I was wondering how you can get to different lakes in the game *Black Bass*.

Michael
Castro Valley, CA

OK Partner, DRAW!



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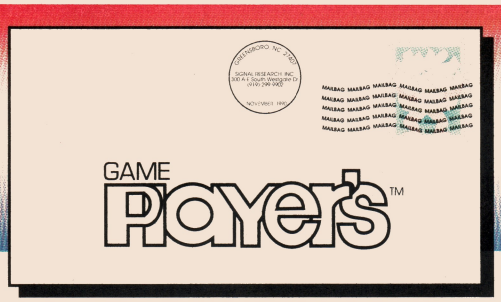

MAILBAG

In the practice mode, you can go to any lake at any time. But if you're playing in the tournament mode, you must catch a certain number and size of fish to move on to the lakes. Sorry, but this is a game where skill is the only thing that can help you.

The Last Ninja

I have *The Last Ninja*, and it's great. But I can't pass the crocodile at the end of level 2. What should I do?

Sean
Las Vegas, NV

On the screen before the crocodile, there's a torch. Take your bottle and set it on fire to make a Molotov cocktail — then throw it at that 'gator.

Tombs & Treasures

I've gone pretty far in *Tombs & Treasures*. But I still can't find anything in the nunnery besides the Ixmol Jewel. And I can't find anything at all in the Well of Sacrifice.

Tres
Pilot Mountain, NC

While you're in the nunnery, wash the jewel and the lighter. There's a hole there you should put your sword into. The reason you can't find anything in the Well of Sacrifice is probably *because you've forgotten an important step earlier in the game. You might want to retrace your steps or start over in case you've missed something. But once you reach the well, talk to Jose for some important clues.*

StarTropics

In *StarTropics*, I got to Ghost Village on board 3, but I can't get past the part with the four skull heads in the 28 blocks. Could you tell me how to get past it?

Mike
Richmond, VA

We're not sure which room you're in, but here are some general tips for exploring the Ghost Village. First, you can kill all of the enemies or step on all of the blocks to reveal a hidden door. Also, you can use the Rod of Sight to reveal a ghost, which you then kill to reveal a hidden door. We hope all is revealed!

Gargoyle's Quest

In my Game Boy version of *Gargoyle's Quest*, I can get past the castle of Darkoan, but my trails end at the Desert of Destitution. I can't seem to find the Candle of Darkness. In the middle of the desert towards the north end you find a cratorlike cave. How do I get into it? There's a force that keeps me from getting in.

Jeremy
Sierra Vista, AZ

Try going into the cave from a different direction. First, go to the upper left of the desert and start going down, right, down, right, and so on. By the time you reach the cave, you should be able to enter. The Candle of Darkness is hidden inside the cave.

GP

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

Do you have any questions about your favorite videogames? Do you have hints or tips you'd like to share with your other *Game Player's* pals? If so, write to us at *Game Player's* Mailbag; 300-A South Westgate Drive; Greensboro, NC 27407. Due to the volume of mail we receive, we regret that we cannot reply to individual requests.

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NEW GAMES ON THE HORIZON

Leslie Mizell

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DRAGON WARRIOR III NES

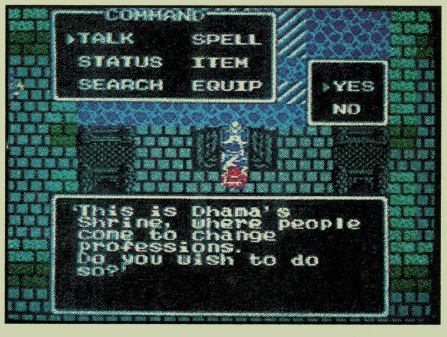
This **Enix** game is the largest in the *Dragon Warrior* series for Nintendo. In Tantegel, you visit the castle, where the king sends you on a journey to defeat the archfiend Baramos. With only 50 pieces of gold, you must recruit a party.

Your explorers can be heroes, soldiers, priests, wizards, fighters, merchants, goof-offs, or sages. Each character has certain strengths and weaknesses, so balance them carefully.

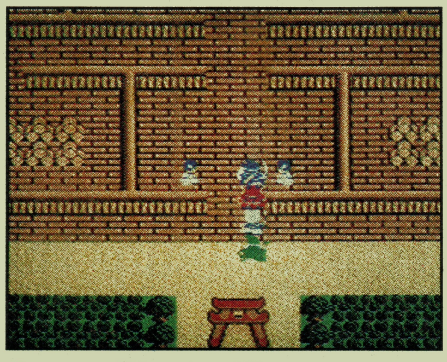
As you travel throughout the land, day will turn into night, your characters will need food and rest, and your party will meet different types of people. You must learn — and learn quickly — to distinguish friend from enemy. Both fighting maneuvers and spells can be used in combat.

There are villages throughout the land for you to visit. Some, such as Noaniels, are under a spell, which you must break before you may question its people. In places such as the Shrine of Dhama, you can save your game and change a character's class.

Explore well and your party will obtain all six orbs you need before you can enter Liamland. You may now ride Ramia, a legendary bird who will take your party to the Castle of Baramos, where you'll face your fiercest battle.



Dragon Warrior III

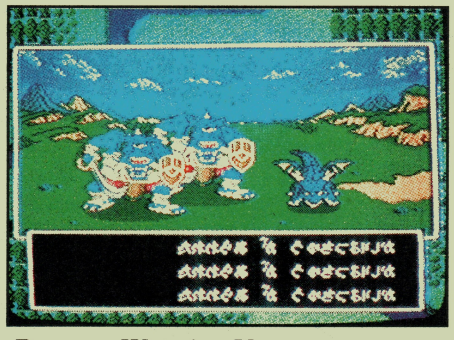


Dragon Warrior III

DRAGON WARRIOR V SUPER NES

Dragon Warrior V is based on one of the phenomenally successful Japanese *Dragon Quest* games (see "Near-Riots Erupt in Japan").

As in previous *Dragon Warrior* adventures, you'll explore a huge world, looking for items, building experience, fighting monsters, and casting spells. But *this* time, your adventure is in a new environment: the Super NES. You can look forward to a larger game with better graphics and more depth than any other in the series.



Dragon Warrior V

Enix, the publisher of *Dragon Warrior II* and *Dragon Warrior III* for NES, reports that *Dragon Warrior V* is still in the very early stages of development, with no release date yet scheduled.

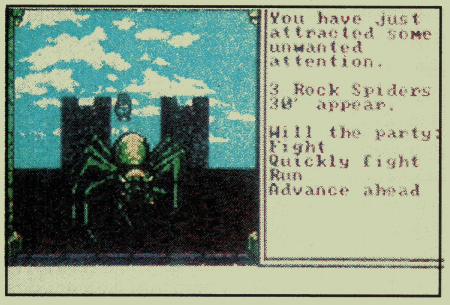
DRAGON WARRIORS NES

This RPG from **Kemco-Seika** is more traditional than the company's *Shadowgate*, but it, too, is based on an earlier computer game. You're part of a band of adventurers who sail across dangerous, uncharted seas searching for the island of Dilmun.

The monarch of this land, King Drake of Phoebus, has declared magic illegal and has imprisoned or killed all the magicians. His decree has outraged the rulers of neighboring islands, and they are threatening to release fierce guardian dragons to encourage King Drake to change his mind.

You no sooner land on Dilmun than you're arrested for spell casting. When you're sentenced to a life in Purgatory, you must use your magic powers — and use them quickly — to escape an eternity in misery.

Dragon Wars, which features more than 60 monsters and 65 spells, was designed to suit role players of all kinds. You can choose the complexity of your battles, the tactics you use when fighting, and the strength of your spells. You can save your progress at any time, and there's no complex mapping required.



Dragon Wars

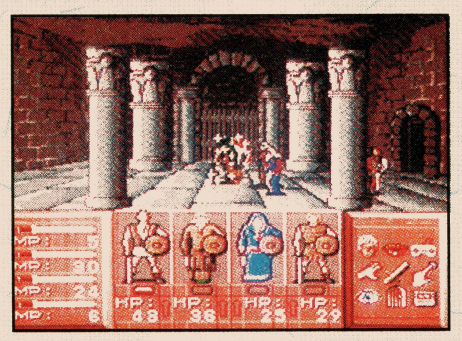
Dragon Wars

DRAKKHEN
SUPER NES

The world of the Draconians was a peaceful one. Peaceful, that is, until the dragons who control the four elements of wind, rain, fire, and water tried to grab even more power. The dragons stole the eight tears — stone gems that controlled the "primal realm," all the magic in the universe.

Your party of four bravely sets out to regain the jewels from the eight dragon princes and princesses who are holding them. If you can restore the eight tears, you'll be able to resurrect the Great Dragon. If you succeed, the order of the universe is restored. If the dragon dies because the gems are not restored, the world — and all universal magic — will vanish.

Originally a computer game developed by Data East, *Drakkhen* is being produced for the Super NES by **Kemco-Seika**. In the adventure, you move between the four members of your party as you search a volcanic island for the eight tears. There are weapons and spells to collect, taverns to investigate, and people to question. All the classic role-playing elements are found in *Drakkhen*.



Drakkhen

Drakkhen

FARIA: A WORLD OF MYSTERY & DANGER
NES

Role-playing fans might recognize the name *Faria* — it was an early RPG for computers. Now **Nexoft** (the company who developed *Wizardry*) is bringing the game to Nintendo.

In *Faria*, an evil magician named Zill has kidnapped the princess of your land, and has turned her knight errant into a woman warrior! The king of the land has sent troops in to fight Zill, but not one soldier has returned. His magicians are helpless.

In desperation, he sends a message around the country, begging for a fighter brave enough to save the land. You alone reply to his plea. It's up to you to rescue the princess and help the knight regain his true form. There are ten townships to explore, so your task won't be an easy one.

Faria should be released this summer.

Fantasy... What?

OK, the latest cartridge is getting rave reviews as one of the best fantasy role-playing games ever. What does that tell you? It's a great game, but is it the kind of game you like? Just what is a *fantasy role-playing game* anyway? You know what *fantasy* is, and if you've ever been to a play or seen a movie, you know what *role playing* is. But category lines get crossed — and it can be confusing to see games described as adventures, role-playing adventures, strategy games, action-strategy games, simulations, action games (or arcade games, shooters, and shoot-em-ups), and so on.

The videogame industry has closely followed the path of the older, more established computer game industry. The terms above, traditionally used to describe games for computers, are now used regularly as category descriptions for your NES games. If these terms sometimes seem vague, rest assured — they can be.

In the case of a fantasy role-playing game, there are a few important components that put this kind of game into its category. First, you don't play at breakneck speed. Second, you must think a lot and make a variety of decisions. And third, you won't finish a game very quickly.

More specifically, in a fantasy role-playing game, you always play a single character (or a small band of adventurers) who must journey through different lands or worlds and do battle in order to meet a single goal. Your character is almost always involved in the struggle of good versus evil, and he or she usually has several unique attributes such as strength, endurance, weapons, gold, and, perhaps, magic spells.

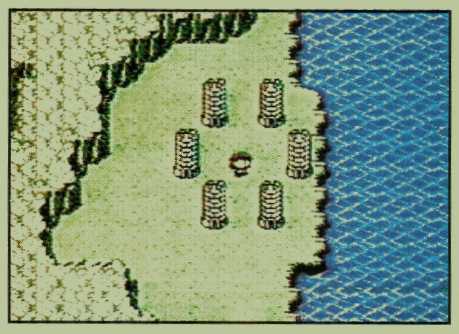
Fantasy role-playing games (you sometimes see them referred to as FRP games) are often called role-playing adventures as well. But whatever category a game is placed in, look closely at magazine articles, game reviews, and advertisements, and you'll get a clear idea of what any game is about, and if it's right for you.

— *L.E.*

THE ANSWERS YOU NEED

FILL OUT AND MAIL IN THE SUBSCRIPTION CARD TODAY

Faria



Faria

FINAL FANTASY II
SUPER NES

Square Soft's original plans were to produce an 8-bit (NES) *Final Fantasy II* to join their two *Final Fantasy Legend* Game Boy adventures. But the advent of the Super NES changed all that, and now *Final Fantasy II* will be the company's first RPG for the 16-bit machine.

This extremely large game, which has battery-backup capability for saved games, should take between 40 and 80 hours to complete, according to a spokesperson for Square Soft. In the game, you control a party of four characters as they search foreign lands and travel in strange new vehicles.

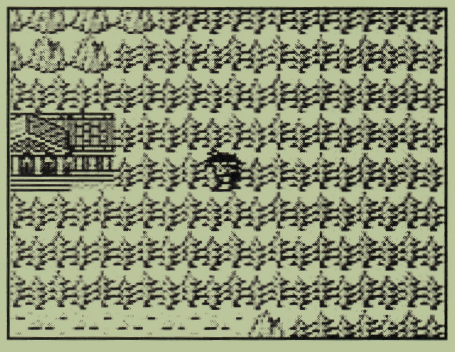
The 84-page instruction manual should help you identify the more than 260 enemies and the 250 items to find and use. As an added bonus, readers can follow the *Final Fantasy* storylines in Disney's new *Final Fantasy* comic book series.

FINAL FANTASY LEGEND II
GAME BOY

In ancient times, gods visited the world and used *magi*, a mysterious source of power. Before they left the planet, the gods split the magi into 77 parts and scattered the pieces into the winds. The legend grew that any warrior who was brave and determined enough to unite the magi would be rewarded with incredible powers.

In this **Nexoft** game, you're given a single piece of the magi by your father, who sets out to find the other pieces. When your father fails to return, you begin a quest of your own, assembling a party that eventually includes your missing father.

The word is that *Final Fantasy Legend II* is not only a better game than the first *FFL*, but that it's also better than a lot of NES role-playing games.



Final Fantasy Legend II

THE MAGIC CANDLE
NES

The magic candle in the title of this **American Sammy** RPG is an eternal flame whose glow has imprisoned a demon for thousands of years. But for some reason, the candle is now going out. Your six-member troupe must locate lost spells that will keep the demon in his waxy prison.

The computer version of this game won GAME PLAYER'S Best Fantasy RPG for 1989. The combination of solid storyline, good magic and combat systems, and leisurely pace made it a favorite.

The Magic Candle

MIGHT AND MAGIC
NES

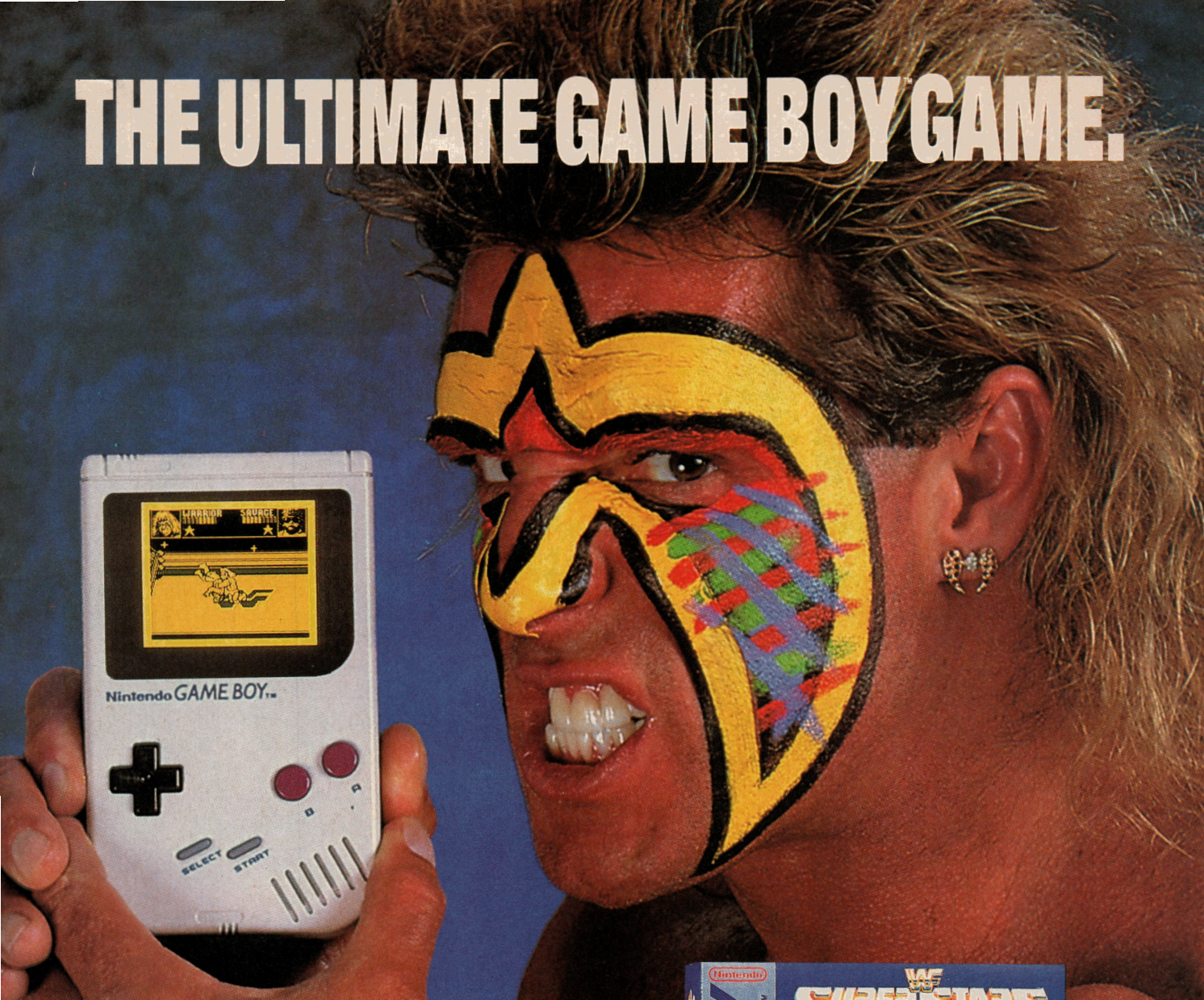
Here's another role-playing adventure that comes to Nintendo by way of personal computers. **American Sammy** is bringing the *Might and Magic* story to the NES.

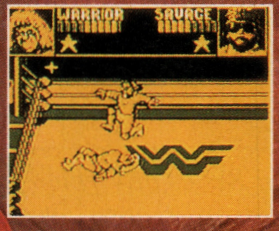
In *Might and Magic*, you must form a band of six adventurers and set out on one of 30 interconnected quests. Set in the land of Varn, each mission advances you one step further in your journey to discover the secret of the Inner Sanctum.

In the computer version of *Might and Magic*, you use pre-programmed characters or create your own knight, paladin, archer, cleric, sorcerer, or robber. Your troupe has to cross oceans, search dungeons, climb mountains, and explore castles to fulfill its missions. The subterranean towns of Varn contain shops for buying food and weapons, temples to minister to the sick and injured, training grounds to advance to a higher experience level, and inns which provide shelter between game sessions.

You must learn to cast dozens of spells and fight a score of monsters — some of whom can be bribed into joining your party. Watch out for the treasure chests, though. They hold not only great riches, but unpleasant surprises as well.

THE ULTIMATE GAME BOY™ GAME.





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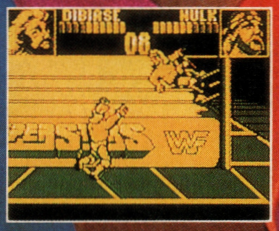
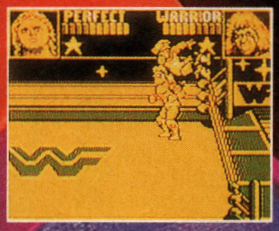


OUT-OF-THE-RING MAYHEM!
Watch out for a powerslam!



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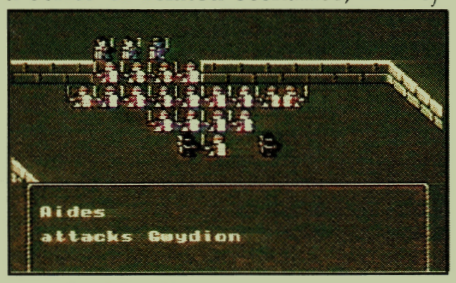
POOL OF RADIANCE NES

The second in **FCI's** line of Advanced Dungeons and Dragons (AD&D) games — the first was *Heroes of the Lance* — *Pool of Radiance* is set in the world of Krynn and is based on the Official AD&D Forgotten Realms module.

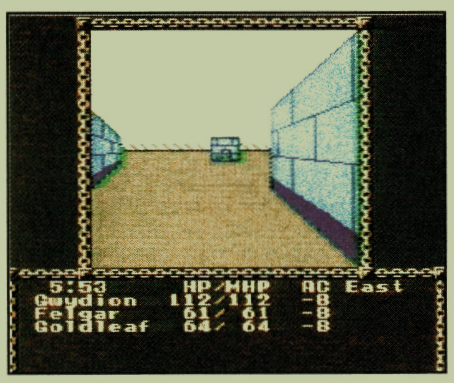
Not so much one adventure as it is a series of related scenarios, *Pool of*



Pool of Radiance

Radiance begins in the once-proud city of Phlan. Now the city has been reduced to rubble, and the people have been driven into the surrounding countryside by a wicked horde. You must assemble a party of adventurers that encompasses a variety of professions and races, and lead them into Phlan. Your quest is to find the mystic Pool of Radiance. Legend tells that its waters affect people differently according to their worthiness, but you hope the pool will be able to restore Phlan to its former glory.

In this expansive game, you encounter orcs, centaurs, trolls, and other creatures as you explore Phlan. There are special weapons and magic spells to learn, but don't expect to zip through the adventure — it should take around 200 hours to complete. FCI plans to release *Pool of Radiance* this summer.



Pool of Radiance

TIMES OF LORE NES

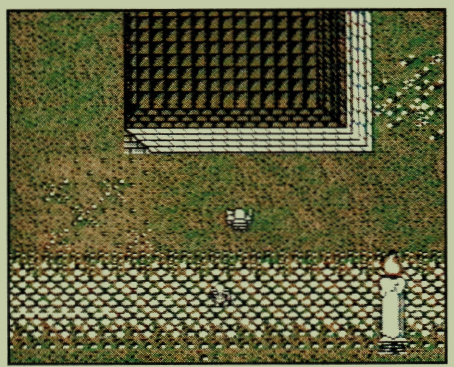
The High King Valwyn doesn't expect to stay long when he returns to his homeland for a visit. But two decades have passed, and the king has not yet returned. The Elden lords are about to revolt against Daniel, the acting ruler of the land.

Times of Lore

The disharmony in Albareth has had a terrible effect on the kingdom. It's no longer safe to travel though the land. Farms are being abandoned while families move into walled cities and castles. Trade is at a standstill. Food is becoming scarce. Bandits, monsters, and barbarians roam freely.

Your parents have sent you to live with your uncle in Eralan, the capital of Albareth. There you learn why the kingdom is disintegrating. The objects that the High King once controlled — the Tablet of Truth, the Foretelling Stones, and the Medallion of Power — are missing. And you must recover them.

There's no party of explorers in *Times of Lore*, **Toho's** first RPG. Instead, you act alone as a barbarian, a knight, or a valkyrie.



Times of Lore

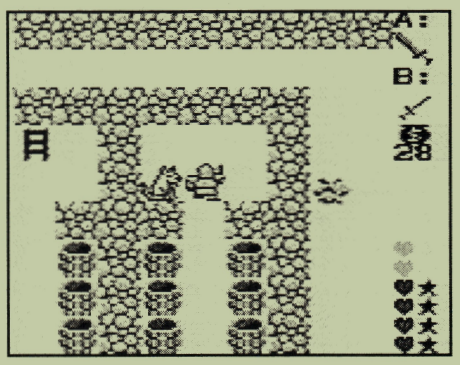
ULTIMA: RUNES OF VIRTUE GAME BOY

The only RPG available for Game Boy besides the *Final Fantasy Legend* games, *Ultima: Runes of Virtue* is an original story developed for **FCI** by the creators of *Ultima* for personal computers.

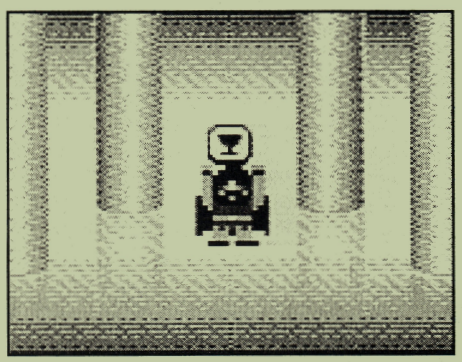
As in the other *Ultima* games, *Runes of Virtue* takes place in Britannia, where Lord British rules supreme. You can play one of four characters — mage, bard, fighter, or ranger — as you explore Britannia, talk to other characters, search dungeons, and even talk to the monarch himself.

One interesting aspect of this game is that you can play it in two distinct ways. A single player can explore some 150 levels of dungeons. But *two players* can use the Game Boy Link and work together to explore 80 of the dungeons, then compete against each other while searching the other 80.

Ultima: Runes of Virtue should be released this summer.



Ultima: Runes of Virtue



Ultima: Runes of Virtue

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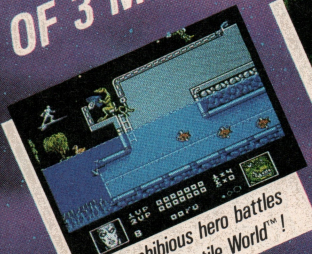
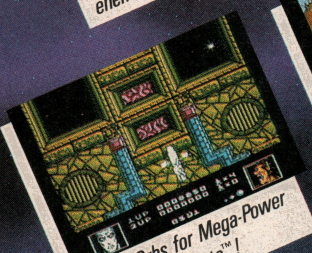
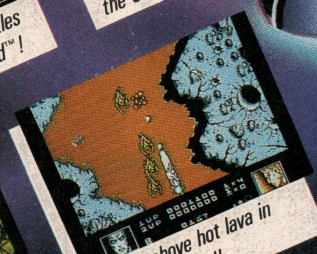


Our amphibious hero battles enemies in Reptile World™!

Defeat Mephisto™ in the Ultimate Battle!



Gather Orbs for Mega-Power to battle Mephisto™!



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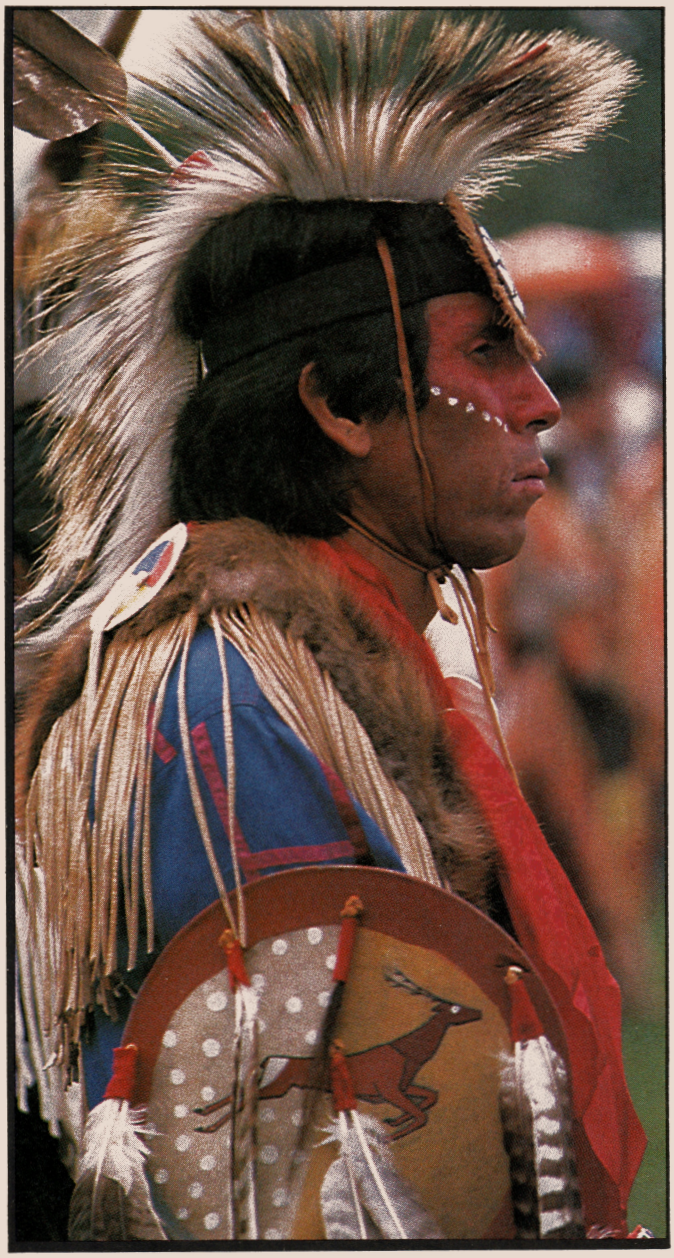
HOME OF THE BRAVE.



Long, long ago, before civilization had driven the Spirits from the land, a man's fate was determined by his ability to balance his own life with the forces at work around him. Natural and supernatural. Physical and spiritual. Good and evil.

With that in mind, a young brave sets out on a quest to unlock the deepest mysteries of the land. He knows his journey will be long and perilous. One in which only the strong survive. And only the brave prevail.

Enter the 8 worlds of Soaring Eagle.

WHOMP 'EM™ traces the adventures of the young brave Soaring Eagle in 8 mysterious stages, or "Worlds." His goal: to capture seven magic totems, each of which holds secret powers necessary to battle the evil monsters lurking at the end of each World. His slim hopes lie in you, the Unseen Hand that guides him on his way.

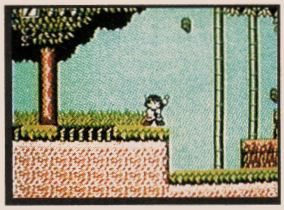
A game of instinct, intelligence, and individual strategy.

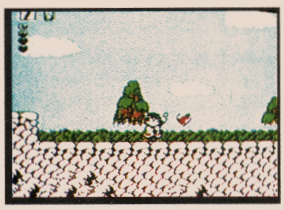
Your task is by no means an easy one.

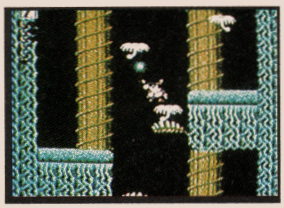
One reason is that there is no particular order to the game's Worlds…it's up to you to decide when it's best to travel each one, and how to combat the creatures that guard its Gate.

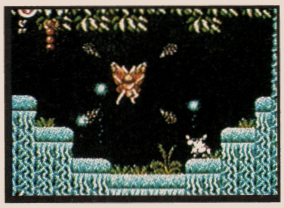
Another is the magic items themselves—deerskin jackets, buffalo headdresses, arrowheads, gourds, magic potions, and other objects that lie hidden along the path. Their powers can only be discovered and mastered with your guidance, and are only effective in certain situations.

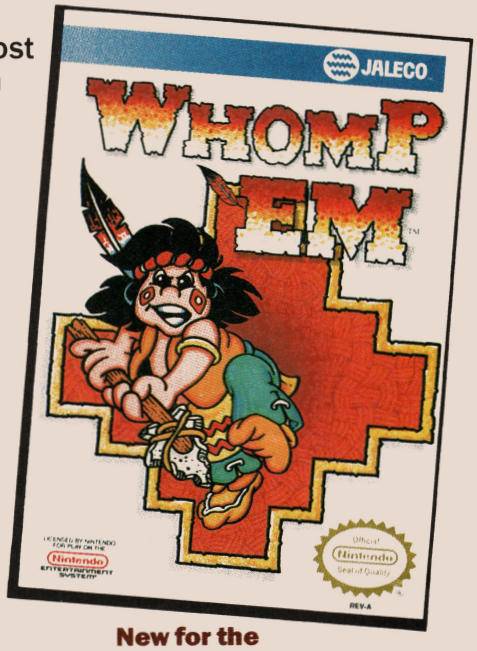
It's a challenge even a master player will find hard to handle. Because in the Worlds of WHOMP 'EM, no move is a sure move. No magic is invincible. And the power of wisdom is the most powerful weapon of all.











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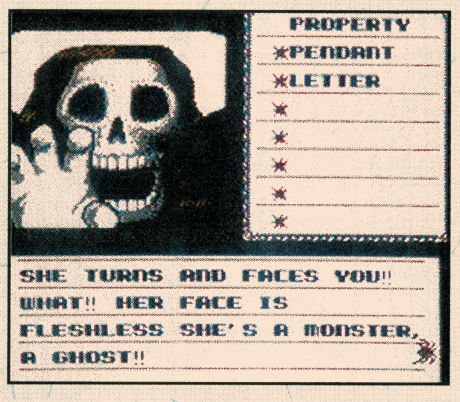
UNINVITED NES

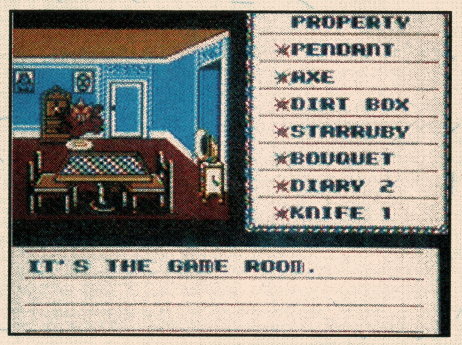
Your sister makes a call at a strange old mansion — and never reappears! You're suddenly on a rescue mission to save your sister's life, and, as it turns out, to save your own.

Kemco-Seika's *Uninvited* was developed by the same folks behind *Shadowgate*. The resemblance is obvious. You enter the mansion, then begin collecting spells and enchanted objects. Each of the 127 graphic screens in this game presents a different puzzle (or even a series of puzzles). An item you grab in one room might be vital to obtaining an object in another, which is then ... you get the picture.

Games in progress can be saved with the battery backup — a feature you'll certainly need as you attempt to kill the undead, outwit demons, and scare ghosts. You may accept an invitation from *Uninvited* sometime this summer.



Uninvited



Uninvited

Near-Riots Erupt in Japan

So you think the *Super Mario Bros.* games are the hottest titles going? Think again.

When *Dragon Quest IV* went on sale last year in Japan, near-riot conditions broke out all across the country. Game players camped out in front of stores, games were snatched from the hands of those lucky enough to get a copy, and police were called about robberies.

At one discount store, 10,000 gamers were lined up waiting to get in. Most had camped out overnight, despite the rainy weather conditions. The lucky ones had tents, sleeping bags, and blankets. Policemen tried to convince some youngsters to go home, but these kids meant busines — they said they'd just send their fathers over to take their place in line.

The response to this series in Japan makes the brouhaha in the U.S. over a new *Mario*, *Castlevania*, or *Mega Man* game seem trivial. In its first day on store shelves, *Dragon Quest IV* sold 1.3 million copies.

Some people managed to get their hands on a *Dragon Quest IV* cartridge by less than legal ways. Two thieves on bicycles sped by 11-year-old Keiichi Sumida and snatched the newly purchased game from his hands. And 13-year-old Koji Sakamoto was threatened by bullies until he handed over his copy of the game. Similar reports were given to police from all over the country.

Since the first of the *Dragon Quest* series — which is known in the U.S. as *Dragon Warrior* — was released in Japan back in 1986, sales have been steadily climbing. *Dragon Quest* sold 1.4 million copies, *DQII* sold 2.3 million, and *DQIII* sold 3.4 million.

— *L.M.*

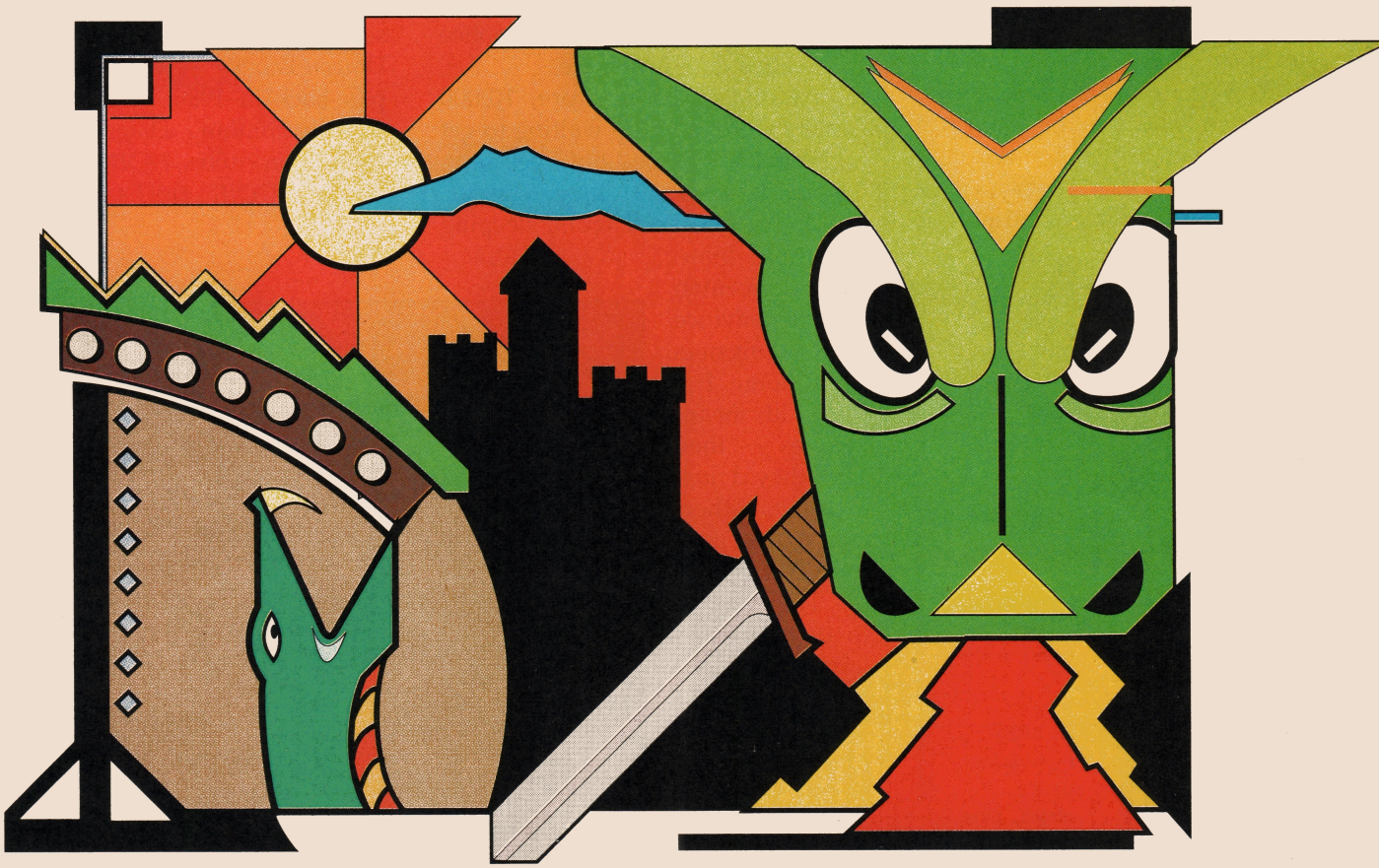
When Dragon Quest IV *went on sale, merchants were mobbed by game players trying to buy copies.*

GP

RPGs: ADVENTURING, NINTENDO-STYLE

It wasn't so long ago that NES players had little to choose from in the way of role-playing games (RPGs). With the exception of *The Legend of Zelda* and *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link*, two early hits, most players spent their time with arcade-action games. While everyone loves the challenge of a good arcade-style game, the same can't be said for RPG adventures. Those who like the challenge of an RPG enjoy the regular combat, the exploration of a self-contained world, and the usual time-consuming experience-building of your game character or characters.

If you're a successful RPG gamer, check out our compilation of great RPG adventures to see what you've missed. If you've never tried an RPG, you won't know if this style of game is for you — but you owe it to yourself to pick up one of these titles and take a look at what you've been missing. You'll be tested, you'll be frustrated — but we bet you'll be intrigued.



Crystalis

Not too far in the future, a great war erupted on Earth. Civilization was wiped out, and the planet's animals, blasted by radiation, became wandering mutants. Eventually, these animals took over an Earth that had once belonged to humans.

Of course, a few people did survive the great war. At first these people were scattered throughout the world, but eventually they banded together. Using their shared knowledge, they were able to build a vast tower in the sky. In this floating tower-city, they believed they were finally safe from the rampaging mutants on the surface of Earth. These refugees hoped one day to return civilization, law, and order to the savage plains. But over time, their intentions grew corrupt and they planned to take over the Earth's surface by any means they could.

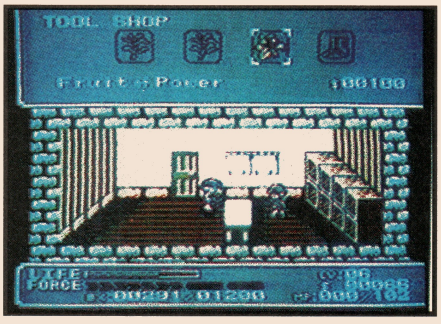
In **SNK's** *Crystalis*, you play a hero uncertain even of his own identity. As the game begins, you're awakened from a state of suspended animation with no idea where you fit into the tower-people's plot. Only by talking with the people you meet, practicing your fighting skills, and earning the money you need to equip yourself, can you fulfill your destiny.

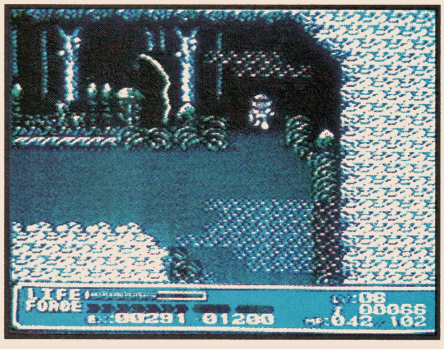
Fans of quest games will enjoy *Crystalis*. While it may lack the com-

plexity of a *Zelda* game, it's still a good adventure. The interconnection of the plot elements keeps you guessing, but you won't have too much trouble arriving at the final solution.

Game Player's Megatip:

You'll find items vital to your quest in the rooms just past the lions. The Storm Bracelet maximizes the Thunder Sword's power; the Power Ring helps you defeat the Evil Ruler; the Ivory Statue allows you to heal Kensu and learn your final spell; and the powerful Psycho Armor allows you to recharge your life meter by standing still for a moment while you're wearing it.





Dragon Warrior

Long ago, there was a mystical kingdom shrouded in blackness. This land, known as Alefgard, was saved from perpetual darkness by a brave knight, Erdrick, who stole balls of light from Alefgard's enemies.

But now the balls of light have been stolen back by a Dragonlord, who has also kidnapped the king's daughter. You are Erdrick's heir, and it falls to you to recover the light and the princess.

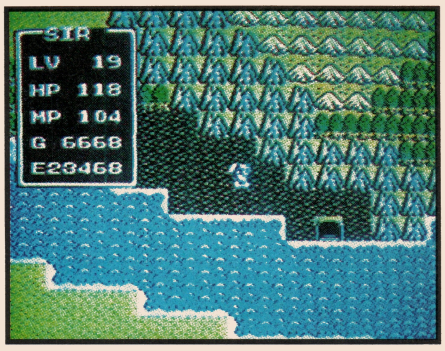
The *Dragon Warrior* games are a phenomenal success in Japan, where the original has spawned several sequels. This first U.S. *Dragon Warrior* has remained popular with players since **Nintendo** released it in July 1989. Though you can't create your own character in *Dragon Warrior*, you can accumulate experience points and cast spells.

Alefgard and the Dragonlord's castle, Tantegel, encompass huge areas, and you must do a lot of exploring and mapping to find the items you need to finish your quest. Though it's a good idea to map the caves, it's almost essential to map the grave.

As in most RPGs, you must talk to some people and fight others. There are tool shops, inns, general stores, and locksmiths to visit, and you have a variety of weapons and armor at your disposal — not to mention dragon's scales, winds, fairy water, and herbs. Search for items, but don't neglect your strength and energy. You should starting building experience early because you need a level of at least 20 to defeat the Dragonlord and save Alefgard.

Game Player's Megatip:

To prove that you're Erdrick's descendant, you must find Erdrick's token. You'll meet a man who will give you the coordinates for it. Then, after you've rescued the princess from the dragon, she'll offer you her love. Select Gwaelin's Love on your subscreen, and she'll give you the coordinates of your current location. You can use the two sets of points to find the token.



Dragon Warrior II

A century ago, the son of Erdrick the Great defeated the evil Dragonlord and brought peace to the land of Alefgard. But that peace has been shattered. Hargon the Sorcerer has attacked Moonbrooke and burned the castle to the ground. As part of his plan to rule the land, Hargon has summoned evil gods back from the dead.

It's up to you — son of the King of Midenhall and a descendant of Erdrick — to recover five mystic Crests and to gain enough power to defeat Hargon in **Enix's** *Dragon Warrior II*.

Before you set out on your quest, travel to the nearby castles and talk with the other descendants of Erdrick. Your father can give you the provisions you need to survive. Don't forget to equip yourself with them on the Command menu — otherwise you'll just carry them around.

When you're ready to enter combat, the game freezes until you enter battle commands. Plan your fight carefully, and don't forget that some spells work on entire groups of enemies. Don't skimp on these spells — the faster you can eliminate your foes, the better. Don't skimp on the Heal spells, either. A dead party is of no use to the people of Alefgard.

Use the Run command only when you must. You *may* get off the hook occasionally, but if you can't escape, you've let the enemies get in some free shots. If your enemies haven't seen you, you can flee without fear of being caught.

After you've tucked a little combat experience under your belt, start thinking about sailing the high seas to explore the rest of the world. But remember that you must find the Cloak of Wind before you can locate a ship

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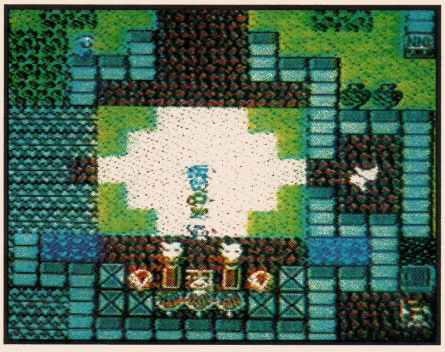
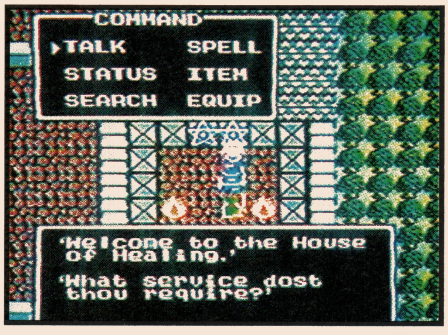
and set sail. Just follow the clues you're given, and you shouldn't have too much trouble.

Even better than the first *Dragon Warrior* adventure — it's almost four times larger — *Dragon Warrior II* shouldn't be missed.

Game Player's Megatip:

To find the sunken treasure ship *Relentless*, sail north from Lianport. In the middle of the ocean, there's a shallow area (one square wide) that you can't sail over. Push your ship close against the square, then use the Search command to dive into the water. You may have to search all four sides before you find the treasure.





Final Fantasy

When Evil envelops the land in darkness, your mission is obvious: You must return the light of peace to your people.

Many hardships and trials lie before you. You must create a band of four Light Warriors from a force of fighters, thieves, martial artists, and magicians. You need all their skills and experience to restore the powers of Earth, Wind, Fire, and Water to the Four Orbs.

Your adventure takes you to all corners of a strange new world, where you'll face deadly perils in dangerous castles, dark caverns, and uncharted lands. Hordes of ferocious monsters may impede your every move, but great riches await the successful explorer.

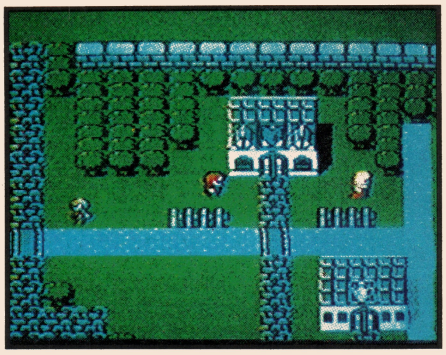
Before you assemble your party of warriors for **Nintendo's** *Final Fantasy*, learn something about each candidate's experience. The fighters are professionals, trained in the use of all weapons. Even though they wear heavy armor, these warriors are quick on their feet.

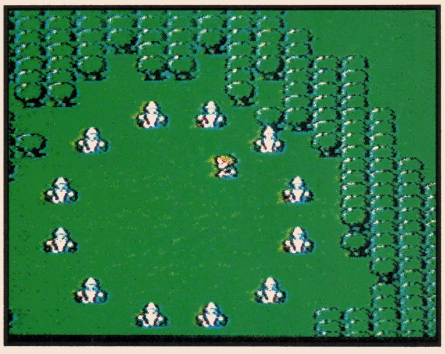
Agility and dexterity are the strong points of the thieves — good traits to have when you need to flee from enemy attacks. The martial-arts masters are mentally and physically tough. They can fight with bare hands, so if you're short on riches or weapons, you'll want these warriors on your team. There are three magicians to choose from — red, white, and black. Red magicians can learn both black and white magic spells and are fairly good fighters. White magicians, though not good fighters, can heal wounds, cast defensive spells, and learn powerful magic. The black magic warriors use powerful spells to attack the enemy.

When you enter combat, consider what your chances are. If the odds for a victory are slim, give serious thought to choosing the Run command. If you elect to stay and fight, it's a fight to the death — either the enemies or one or more of your warriors won't survive. But if you lose an ally in battle, don't panic. Most towns have clinics where you can find a magician to revive your warrior ... for a price.

Game Player's Megatip:

Your first stop after Coneria should be the Temple of Fiends, located northwest of the Dream City. Once you rescue the princess held captive in the Temple, the King rewards you with a bridge north of Coneria that connects the city with faraway lands. Crossing the North Bridge ends the prologue of *Final Fantasy*.





The Legend of Zelda

The granddaddy of all NES role-playing games is almost as popular today as it was when first released during the summer of 1987. Only the Mario characters share the licensing success — with bedsheets, cereal, glasses, and so on — that Zelda and Link have had.

In **Nintendo's** *The Legend of Zelda*, Ganon, Prince of Darkness, has invaded the land of Hyrule and captured Zelda, the ruler of the land. Just before she's kidnapped, Zelda breaks the powerful Triforce of Wisdom into eight pieces to prevent Ganon from stealing it.

You're Link, and despite your young age, only you have the skill to find and rebuild the Triforce. You're also the only person in Hyrule brave enough to enter Death Mountain and fight Ganon.

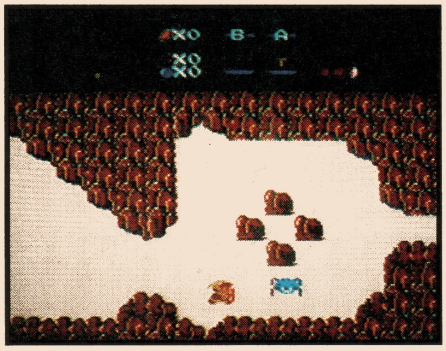
Impa, a friend of Zelda's, gives you the layout of the secret underground mazes you need to explore. The mazes hold evil enemies, but there are also friends. Fairies, for example, give you hearts to restore your energy, and you get a treasure for each labyrinth you finish. Carry weapons to defeat your enemies, and keep an eye on the auxiliary screen so you'll know your powers. There are dozens

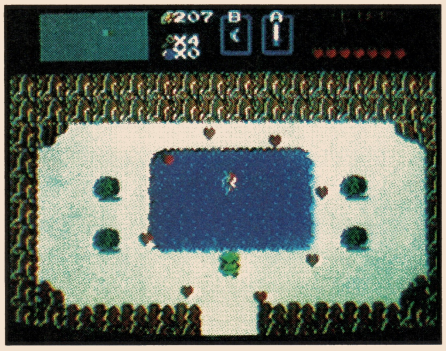
of enemies, but there's plenty of magic to help you as well.

Which way is left and which way is right in the 128 screens of the Overworld? What pieces of the Triforce are hidden in the eight mazes of the Underworld? Only time — and a lot of exploring — will help you find out. And once you've defeated Ganon, you can go right into a second quest.

Game Player's Megatip:

You can defeat the Dodongos even if you have only two bombs. Stand in front of one Dodongo and set two bombs, one right after the other. The creature will munch on the first bomb and become stunned when the second goes off. Kill it quickly, and it will leave four bombs behind.





Nobunaga's Ambition II

When **Koei** introduced the computer version of *Nobunaga's Ambition* in 1988, it caused a sensation. It was a game of unprecedented historic role-playing depth, and it really brought medieval Japanese history to life. *Nobunaga* quickly became a bestseller.

The Nintendo version which followed in June 1989 got mixed reviews, however. Some people thought the game looked squeezed down to fit the NES screen, and the scrolling on the battlefield screens was jerky and slow. But each of Koei's subsequent computer translations got better, until finally NES players were getting virtually the same game for their money as computer gamers.

Then the follow-up, *Nobunaga's Ambition II*, arrived. The designers of *Nobunaga II* had obviously done their homework for the NES format — everything about the game looks great, and there's none of the earlier "squeezing." This game is crisper, more vivid, and considerably richer in detail than the original epic.

The player's goal remains essentially the same as in the first game. As a 16th-century Japanese warlord, you must strive to become the sole ruler of Japan. Using diplomatic, economic, and military strategies, you strengthen your own fiefdom while absorbing those of your rivals.

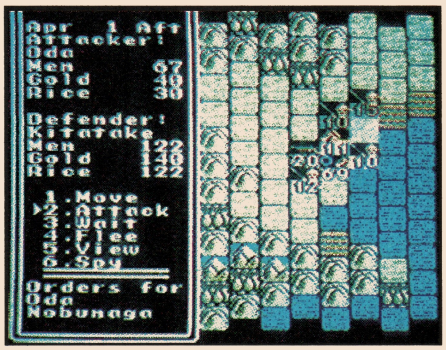
One interesting feature of *Nobunaga II* is that you can issue several commands per turn. The execution of each command costs energy, however, and when a samurai becomes too weary to work, he must rest and recuperate. This is a good reason to acquire as many trusted henchmen as you can afford — you won't spend a lot of down time. Another unique feature is the elaborate siege warfare — used for both offensive and defensive play.

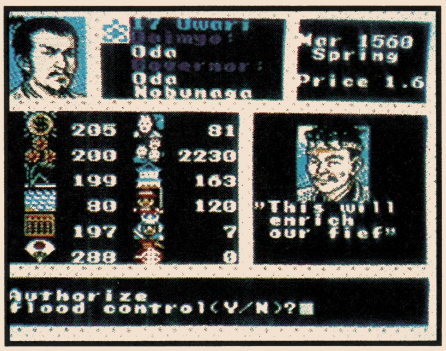
In terms of looks, playability, and sophistication, *Nobunaga II* is almost a whole new game. Players who already know and love its honored ancestor may purchase this sequel with the assurance that they'll get their money's worth.

But if you haven't played the original *Nobunaga*, you should still check out its sequel. *Nobunaga II* is an ideal introduction to Koei's lineup of truly distinguished historic simulations.

Game Player's Megatip:

Here's a good way to gain power fast: Choose to play more than one warlord simultaneously, then concentrate on quickly building up both men's power. When they're powerful and in good strategic and geographical positions, use the Diplomacy command to unite them under a single banner. Not only do you double your power with a single stroke, but you also can conquer other warlords with much greater ease.





Shadowgate

Shadowgate ... a crumbling stone fortress that was once the citadel of a proud kingdom ruled by your family. This castle, like your family, has seen better days. And you are the last of a formerly great line of kings.

But you no longer dwell in Shadowgate. Instead, the castle houses the dreaded Warlock Lord, who has laid waste to the land your family loved. Now he plans to raise Behemoth, the ultimate creature of evil, from the bowels of the earth. An old druid priest tells you that you're the only one who can penetrate Shadowgate's secrets and prevent this catastrophe.

You're armed with only your wits and a sword. You'll need both, too, for there are not only flesh-and-blood enemies inside, but also secret passageways, hidden traps, and collapsing floors. As you explore Shadowgate, you learn that almost every object except the stones themselves can be used to assist you in your quest.

When it was first released for personal computers, *Shadowgate* quickly earned a reputation as a real mind-

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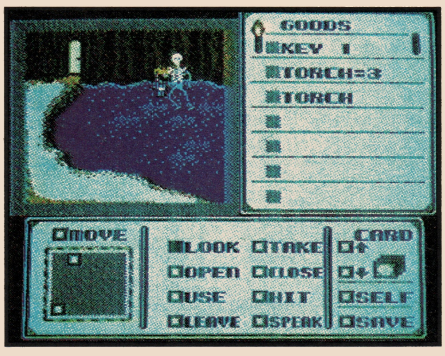
bender. The storyline was twisted and tied in knots at every turn by traps that seemingly could not be avoided and puzzles that appeared unsolvable.

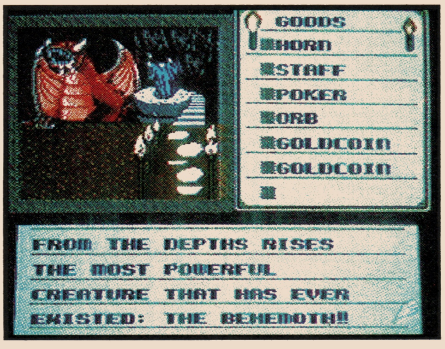
As translated into the Nintendo format by **Kemco-Seika** (with graphics that really are a significant improvement over the limited color available in the personal computer version), *Shadowgate* retains every bit of its fiendishness. The quest remains about as simple as can be: Cleanse the ancient castle Shadowgate of its evil inhabitants and prevent the evil Warlock Lord from unleashing the monster Behemoth on the world.

You're sure to get killed dozens of times as you progress through the castle, but the designers know the peril in the game and have included a save-game feature. It is strongly suggested that you use it before venturing into any dangerous situation.

Game Player's Megatip:

To get past the shark so you can get the key from the skeleton, look for a sphere two rooms to the left of the room where they are. You'll find the sphere if you place a gem in a keyhole. Freeze the water by dropping the sphere into it, then walk across the frozen water to reach the key. Be sure to grab the sphere before you leave — you'll need it later.





Shingen the Ruler

The scope of this epic role-playing simulation from **Hot-B** is very broad: You portray warlord Shingen Takeda (an actual historic figure, as are all the enemies and allies you encounter in the game) and his son and heir, Katsuyori. Your goal is to unify medieval Japan under the banner of the Takeda clan.

The game begins in 1545, a time when Japan was fragmented into 21 separate fiefdoms, most of them ruled by warlords much more powerful than you — and even more ruthless. By allocating resources and issuing one command per month, you must build up the economy and stability of your own provinces, continually strengthen your army, fight off attacks from rival warlords, and gradually extend your own empire.

It's an incredible balancing act because there is never enough time, money, or manpower to take care of every crisis that erupts — not to mention the droughts, plagues, floods, and typhoons that occur at random. Each time you play, you learn a little more about the workings of this dynamic and subtle game. Gradually, you'll evolve into a master strategist and diplomat.

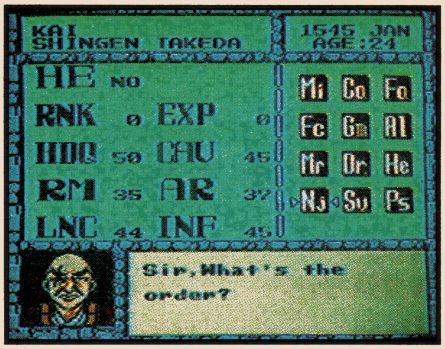
What makes *Shingen* such a great game is that it was designed from the ground up as a Nintendo game. The mechanics of game play are smooth, and the graphics are gorgeously detailed. Not all of the game's fine points are covered in the manual, but complexities in play are tamed by clear, thorough instructions.

As engrossing as the diplomatic and strategic aspects of *Shingen* are, it is the battles which make the game a superior strategic adventure. Instead of having to rely on stylized chessboard-like landscapes and abstract unit icons, you fight campaigns on realistic terrain with lively units of animated archers, musketeers, cavalry, and lancers.

Shingen the Ruler is a mature, challenging, exciting, graphically beautiful example of how to do war games right.

Game Player's Megatip:

If you're attacked by a superior force and the enemy sends his cavalry ahead of his foot soldiers, mass your bowmen and musketeers to bushwhack them, then immediately press the Flee command and fall back to your castle. You'll have eliminated a sizable portion of his cavalry at little risk to yourself.



StarTropics

StarTropics, the newest RPG from **Nintendo**, puts you smack dab in the middle of a manhunt. The missing person is your Uncle Steve. Unfortunately, you're the only person looking for him — and at 15, you're a little young to be a hero.

Dr. Steve Jones was searching for lost archeological ruins in the Coral Sea when he mysteriously disappeared. Chief Coralcola, the leader of the first village you visit, thinks the professor has been abducted and that you're the best hope for his rescue. The village shaman agrees. She sends you off with a reminder to keep your eye on the famous constellation, the Southern Cross (its magic gives you unlimited continues).

Unfortunately, that reminder isn't much help. A more practical approach is to talk with every villager on the first few islands until you gather

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enough clues to find a message in a bottle. The letter gives you the code you need to submerge the Sub-C submarine, your main transportation. You'll be able to travel further and faster underwater than by navigating on foot around the islands.

Most of the island inhabitants are friendly, know who you are, and are willing to talk. In fact, if you don't talk to *all* the villagers in Coralcola, a guard blocks the entrance to the Island Tunnel, the only way to reach Dr. J's lab and the Sub-C.

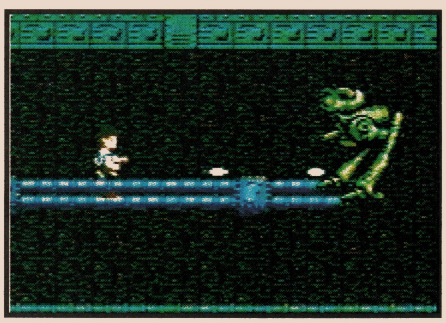
You begin the adventure with one unlikely weapon, a yo-yo. It's powerful, but it still doesn't pack enough of a wallop to knock out all the enemies you'll face. Luckily, you have opportunities to pick up more weapons and magic items.

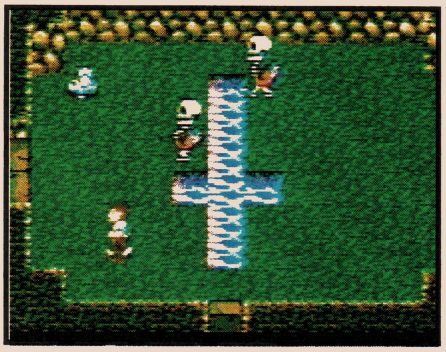
Rarely does an object prove to be useless. You can bet that almost every weapon or magical item you find is needed somewhere in the tunnel ahead — often to defeat a boss. But don't worry about missing the *one* Star of Whatever or Thingamajig Shield and having to retrace your steps. If an object is required for fighting a boss, there are usually several in the tunnel, one of them often hidden just a room or two from that boss.

StarTropics is packed with more action than most role-playing adventures, and it holds other surprises as well. The relatively complicated mazes provide plenty of challenge for RPG fans.

Game Player's Megatip:

If you rescue the young dolphin being held prisoner by Octo the Huge, the grateful dolphins will lead you to Miracola Island. To beat the octopus, jump over the streams of his deadly ink and wait for him to charge into range. Freeze him there with the magic snowman, then pound him with your yo-yo.





Ultima

This **FCI** game was not only one of the very first translations of a computer title for the NES, but it was also one of Nintendo's first RPGs.

In *Ultima* (aka *Exodus Ultima*), you create a band of explorers, choosing from a wide variety of characters and attributes. You can send priests, druids, paladins, thieves, rangers, or members of six other professions on a mission to save the kingdom of Britannia. These characters can also be from five different races: human, elf, dwarf, bobbit, or fuzzy.

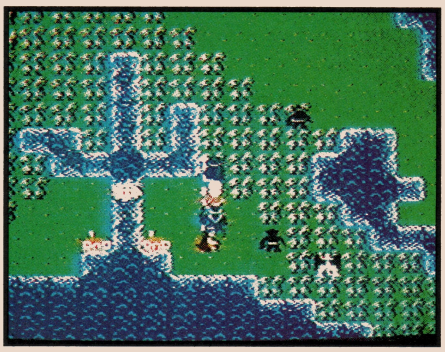
Once you've chosen your band and assigned their wisdom, dexterity, magic powers, and wealth, you must set about the task at hand. Britannia has been threatened by Mondain, an evil magician who has cast an "Exodus" spell over a nearby island, causing chaos throughout the kingdom.

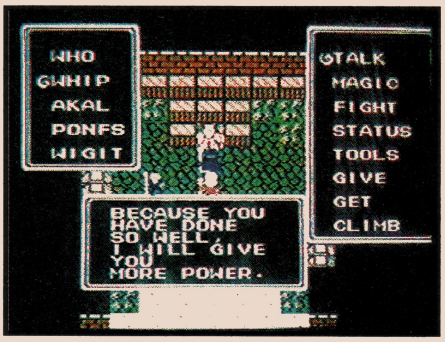
With individual control over each character, you can explore Britannia and search for whirlpools, pirate ships, giant snakes, and dungeons. The passage of time is realistic in *Ultima*, so you must also let your band eat and sleep.

Your band needs all the energy it can get because it will do battle with zombies, goblins, and a host of other deadly foes. Still, you don't have to fight everyone and everything you meet. In fact, fighting the wrong people can get you into trouble. Attack someone in a town, for example, and the guards at the gate jump you. But sometimes if you meet someone you don't want to fight, you can just dash into a building. When you come back out, the enemy *might* not be there.

Game Player's Megatip:

If you're having trouble finding the magic armor and the almighty sword, maybe you don't have all the equipment you need. Go to the Death Cave, located north of Lord British's castle, and look for a silver pick. Now you can search the islands with the pick until you uncover the armor and sword.





Ultima: Quest of the Avatar

Was it mere coincidence that you happened to be lying against this particular tree, by this particular stream, on this particular day? As you doze, you have the sneaking suspicion that someone — or something — has been expecting you.

Then you pick up the glittering ankh, and a mysterious covered wagon appears. You aren't really surprised that the stranger inside the wagon has indeed been awaiting your arrival. He is Hawkwind, a fortuneteller, and one whose advice guides you further along this path of fate.

The path wends its way through the kingdom of Britannia, where Lord British's attempts to establish his country have been met, time and time again, with resistance. Although all is peaceful now, Lord British knows that it can't remain that way. He must recruit the best and the bravest to join the Order of Avatarhood.

These gifted few form Britannia's first line of defense against all intruders. And that's where you come in. Once Hawkwind has tested you and divined what character traits you possess, you're off on a quest to acquire the eight virtues of Avatarhood: Valor, Compassion, Honesty, Honor, Sacrifice, Justice, Humility, and Spirituality.

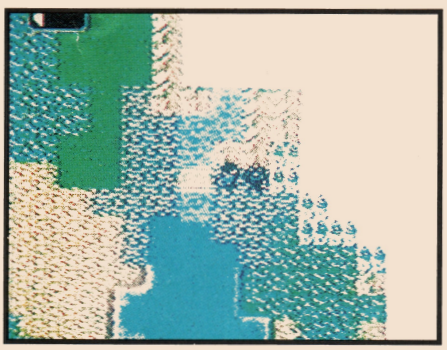
Depending on what Hawkwind's divinations uncover, you become one of eight characters that represent the eight provinces of Britannia. Each character has its own particular strengths and weaknesses at the start of the quest. Become familiar with your character quickly so that you can try to improve areas of weakness and exploit your strengths.

As you journey through Britannia, you meet up with others who share the dream of Avatarhood. Knowledge of their attributes and liabilities is also essential to your success. It's important — especially early in the game — to know who can be counted on in a fight. Though Lord British has cleaned up most of Britannia, there are still a few places where evil reigns.

Ultima: Quest of the Avatar is a wonderfully dense game, full of the complexities and details one expects from the *Ultima* series.

Game Player's Megatip:

Many chambers and passages in the provinces of Britannia have hidden doors leading to essential items. Whenever you're searching a room, look for any tiles or bricks that appear slightly different from the rest. These usually indicate the trigger mechanism for a hidden passage or room.



Zelda II: The Adventure of Link

In **Nintendo's** *Zelda II*, evil beings in Hyrule are once again trying to discover the secrets of the Triforce. When Princess Zelda courageously refuses to impart the secret, she's placed under a sleeping spell. Young Link is once again the sole member of the kingdom who's brave enough to try to free her from the magic.

As Link, you must travel across Hyrule and visit six temples. At the end of each temple maze, there's a statue in which you must place a gem. When all the gems are in place and all the temples sealed, the Triforce of Courage is united with the Triforces of Power and Wisdom — and Zelda is awakened.

You must do several things well in *Zelda II* if you're to win. First, you must be able to coordinate Link's fast-action fighting abilities. Second, you must learn to map your way through a series of complex and deadly mazes. And finally, you must uncover a great many hidden objects and powers.

Link builds up points as he destroys enemies and finds certain objects. It's very important not to try fighting your way through certain temples until you've found certain objects or powers, such as candles, keys, jumping ability, and special fighting techniques.

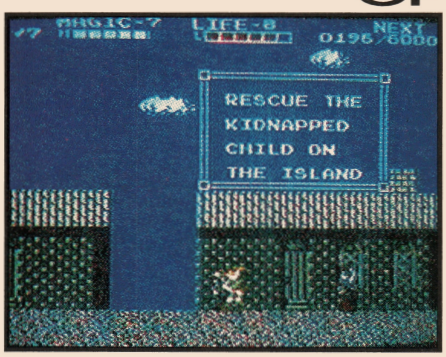
You must explore every inch of Hyrule before your mission is complete, but begin the game by heading east-northeast and visiting Rauru and the first temple. If you visit those areas first, you'll get farther faster.

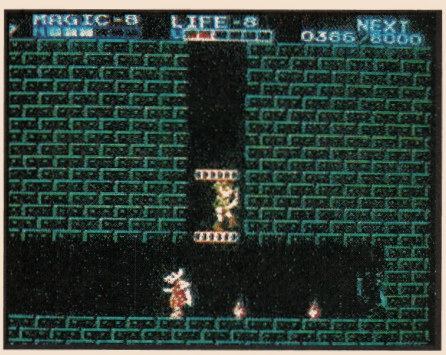
A larger game than *The Legend of Zelda*, *Zelda II* also includes overhead (traveling) and side-scrolling (fighting) viewpoints. Link now has magical powers as well. This new complexity — and some terrifically fierce bosses — make *Zelda II* a worthy sequel.

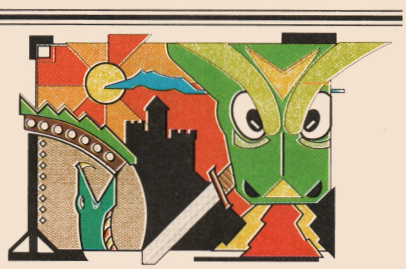
Game Player's Megatip:

There are three magic containers to be found. One container is hidden in a cave. As you get to Midoro Palace, you'll notice the cave on the other side of the mountains. You can reach it easily from North Castle. A second container is in Death Mountain. After you find the hammer, go back outside and use your hammer to break the rock you see. Then go down to retrieve the magic container. The third container is in the town of New Kasuto. You need to use your hammer to clear the woods north of Three-Eye Rock and uncover the city.

GP







SUPER SUPER SUPER NES 3

MORE GAMES TO PLAY!

Matthew A. Firme

If you're excited about the Super NES, you're not the only one. Game companies are excited, too, and many are already producing titles for the new machine. By the time the Super NES hits the store shelves in September, quite a few really great games should be available.

As many of you know by now, **Nintendo of America** began displaying the new Super Nintendo system in early June. Although game players in the U.S. will have to wait until the first of September to get their hands on one, there's plenty of evidence that there will be all kinds of different types of games for the Super NES — something for everyone in the family.

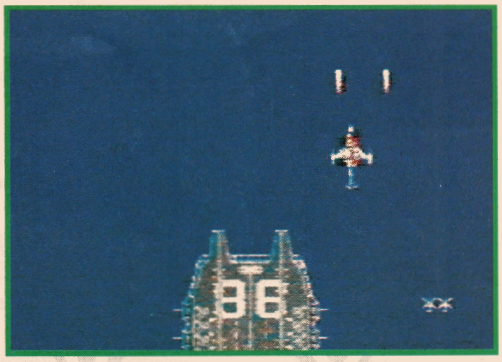
We recently had the chance to play three new Super NES titles — *D-Force* from **Asmik**, a fast-action shooter; *Jelly Bean* from **Sony Imagesoft**, a cute adventure game with a very different kind of main character; and *Ultraman* from **Bandai**, a head-to-head personal combat game on a big, *big* scale that's based on a popular Japanese television show. Here's a sneak preview of this trio of games you'll be seeing on store shelves later this year.

D-Force

You pilot an attack chopper into fierce battle over land and sea — not a new idea, but one that has inspired some very popular games. The graphics in this game aren't as notable as in some of the other Super NES games we've seen, but they're a big improvement over the 8-bit Nintendo!

Through dozens of vertically scrolling screens, you face a seemingly endless array of attacking enemies. What it may lack in graphics, *D-Force* certainly makes up for in enthusiam, so loosen up that trigger finger.

Your high-tech attack 'copter roars onto the scene in *D-Force*.



Blasting enemies and collecting power-ups are the keys to this colorful shooter.

Like airplanes from *"The Flintstones,"* these enormous flying reptiles suddenly attack your chopper.

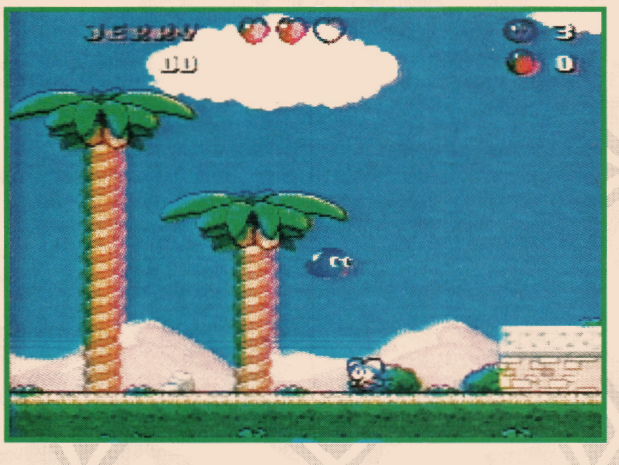
Jelly Bean

He was a normal boy — until the day he met the wizard. On that unlucky day, the wizard cast a spell and turned the boy into a jellybean! Now Jelly Bean must find the wizard and break his enchantment.

Jelly Bean is a lot of fun, with one of videogames' more unusual heroes. Like a wobbly glob of gelatin, Jelly Bean wiggles and oozes his way through an enormous world, looking for the weapons and power-ups he needs to complete his mission.

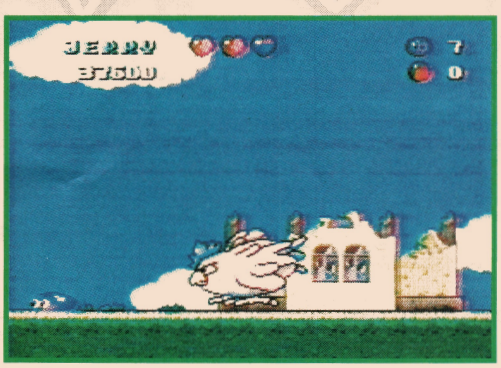
As Jelly Bean, you can jump and stick to walls and ceilings, allowing you to explore places most videogame characters could never reach. You can slide through pipes, climb trees, and even stretch yourself upward to attack enemies over your head.

Sony Imagesoft's *Jelly Bean* is a great game, and the title character is a whimsical, unlikely hero.



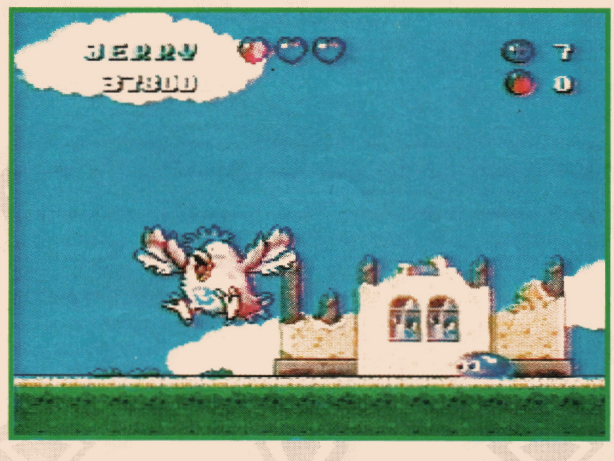
Jelly Bean can leap onto enemies and ride them (a very handy talent), or squash them by flattening himself on top of them.

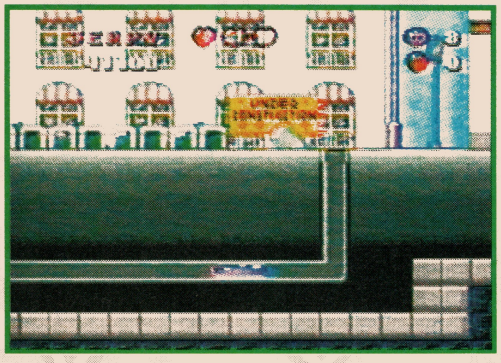
Sometimes Jelly Bean finds a red ball. He can store these inside his body and spit them at enemies.



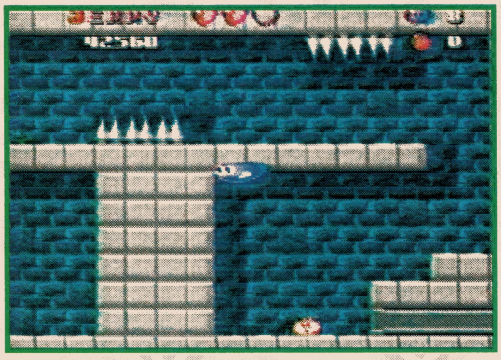
This big chicken is the first boss. He rushes at Jelly Bean, but our hero isn't worried.

Jelly Bean positions himself carefully and spews balls into the flying chicken. It doesn't take much of this to ruffle the bird's feathers.

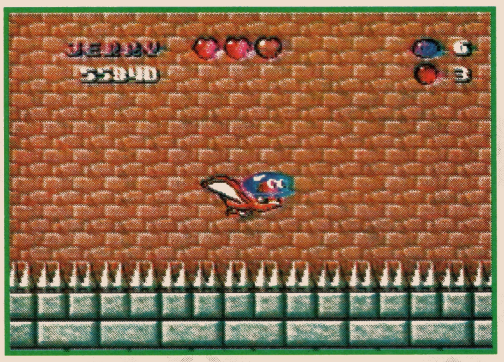




Because of his exceptional "jelliness," Jelly Bean can easily squeeze into this tiny pipe and explore the underside of the city street.



An important part of this game involves sticking to walls and ceilings. Here, Jelly sneaks up on a fire-creature by walking along the ceiling.



Jelly Bean hitches a ride on a bird's back — the only way to cross this dangerous chasm.

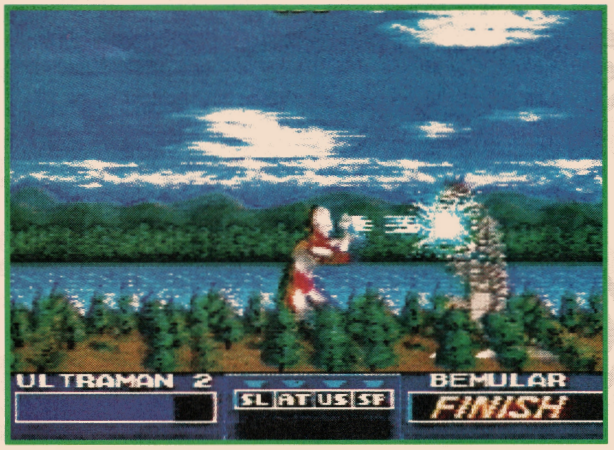
Ultraman

Ultraman captures the campy fun of the popular Japanese TV series on which it is based, although it will probably be a new experience for North American gamers unfamiliar with the television show. The title character is a metal-skinned crime-fighter more than 100 feet tall who protects Tokyo from the many Godzilla-like monsters that attack the city.

In *Ultraman*, our hero meets a series of monsters in mortal combat. Using karate and judo moves — and his secret Ultraman ray — Ultraman must defend Tokyo from certain destruction. The combination of great graphics and super music makes this Bandai game a winner!

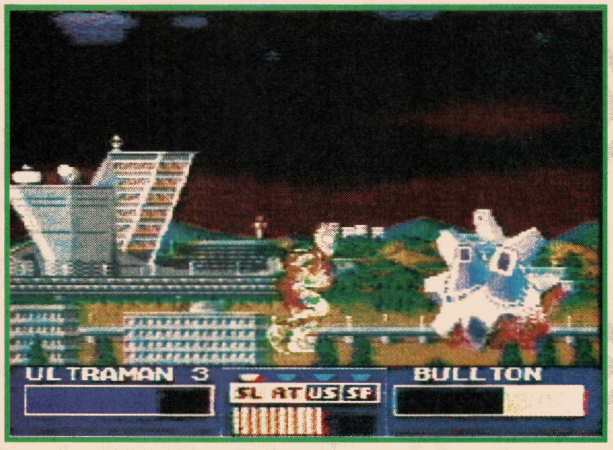
Showing off the terrific scaling ability of the Super NES, Ultraman almost seems to fly into your living room.

Ultraman faces the evil Bemular. By punching, kicking, and in this case, flipping, Bemular, Ultraman wears down his enemy.

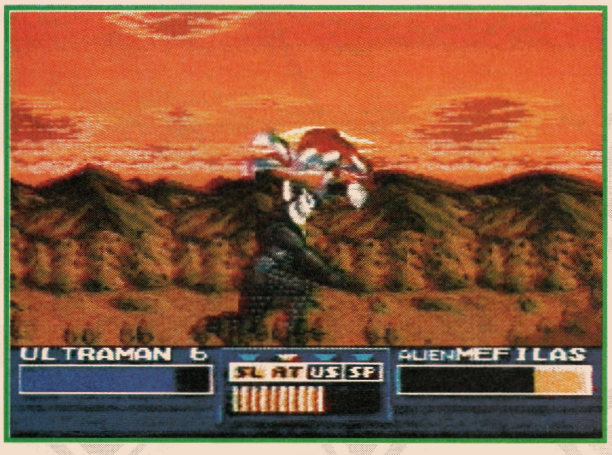


When Bemular's life meter reads "FINISH," Ultraman can destroy the beast once and for all. Wait until Ultraman's power meter is full, then zap the enemy with Ultraman's deadly ray.

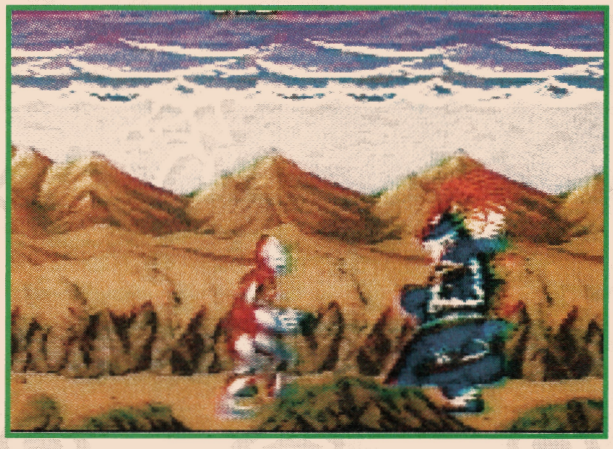
Despite his heavy armor, Ultraman can deliver devastating kicks. Continuously kicking the enemy is a good way to wear him down.



Bullton, a frighteningly alien creature, can freeze Ultraman in his tracks. Bullton also appears and disappears at will, making him a tough enemy.



The tables are turned as Ultraman finds himself being flipped by the powerful Mefilas.



Gelonimon is Ultraman's greatest challenge. It takes skill, strength, and intelligence to defeat this evil creature.

BLASTS
into
THEATERS

Jenny and Cliff escape another harrowing experience. **Leslie Mizell**

The cast and crew of *The Rocketeer* can boast two Academy Award nominations and two Oscars, two Tonys, three Emmy nominations and one Emmy, one Golden Globe, and an ACE Award. Is it any wonder that this adventure made such a big splash when it opened this summer?

Action, romance, intrigue, science fiction — wrap it all into one package, and you've got all the ingredients of *The Rocketeer*. Pilot Cliff Secord is just an ordinary joe until he accidentally gets his hands on a rocket pack. Pursued by the FBI on one side and Nazis on the other, Secord has no option. He learns to use the rocket pack himself to fight the crooks.

The Rocketeer is Joe Johnston's first movie since he filmed *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* in 1989. "I've been a fan of The Rocketeer for nearly ten years," he says, alluding to the creation of the character in a comic book back in 1982. When Johnston finally got a chance to make a movie of the comic strip, he wanted a complete unknown to play ace pilot Cliff Secord.

"It was important that the part of The Rocketeer be played by someone who was completely unencumbered by any baggage from previous roles," he says. Bill Campbell won the part from the hundreds of hopefuls who showed up for the open audition.

"As it happens," says Lloyd Levin, producer for *The Rocketeer*. "[Campbell] also looks similar to the character as drawn in the comic book. Both characters are strong-willed, ambitious, and independent."

Campbell may be familiar to sharp-eyed TV watchers. He's had guest roles in "Family Ties" and "Star Trek: The Next Generation," and a recurring role in "Dynasty," but this is his first feature film.

Jennifer Connelly plays Secord's girlfriend, Jenny Blake, a character added to the film version of the story. Betty, the ladylove from the comic strip, was deemed a little too tough and a little too curvy for the movie version. Last seen in John Hughes' *Career Opportunities*, Connelly has been acting in movies since she was 12. Now a student in Yale University's drama department, she's probably best known for her role opposite David Bowie in the 1986 Jim Henson-George Lucas collaboration *Labyrinth*.

Supporting characters in *The Rocketeer* include Alan Arkin, who plays Secord's friend and mechanic, Peevy. In his long theatre, TV, and film career, Arkin has been seen in the comedy *The Russians Are Coming, the Russians Are Coming*, the thriller *Wait Until Dark*, and the Sherlock Holmes adventure *The Seven Percent Solution*. Last winter, he portrayed Winona Ryder's father in Tim Burton's *Edward Scissorhands*.

Sinister Neville Sinclair is played by Timothy Dalton, better known to

IN the BEGINNING

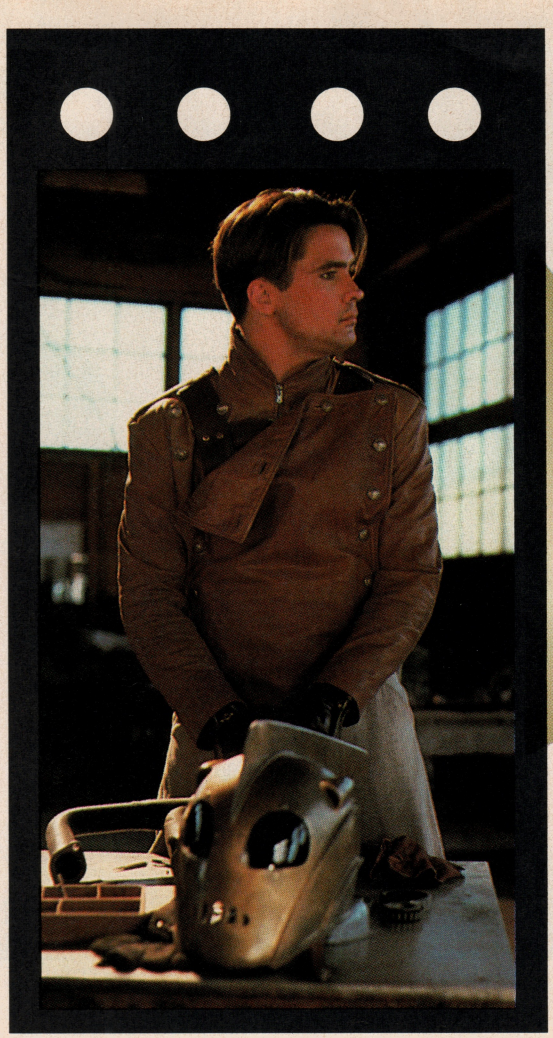
Dave Stevens temporarily left his drafting board for Hollywood while *The Rocketeer* was being filmed. As associate producer of the movie, he wanted to make sure his creation survived the leap the screen.

Stevens's comic strip began as a favor for a friend, who needed a filler for another comic book. But the popularity of The Rocketeer was as jet-propelled as the hero himself. Not long after the strip debuted in 1982, Stevens was asked to continue the strip in his own series of comic books.

The period setting of The Rocketeer comic books causes some interesting situations. Stevens is careful to keep the dialogue, locales, and atmosphere faithful to the 1930s.

"If you're going to have to draw a series and live with it," he says, "you need to create a world with characters that you can face every day. I think it's important to like the characters you draw. In doing so, readers will want to get to know them, too."

Stevens was first approached about a movie version of The Rocketeer in the mid-1980s. Screenwriters Danny Bilson and Paul DeMeo first suggested a movie version, and producers Lawrence and Charles Gordon (*Die Hard* and *Die Hard II: Die Harder*) and Lloyd Levin (*Commando* and *Predator*) backed the effort. The rest is comic-book and film history.



Once Peevy makes him a helmet, Cliff Secord (Bill Campbell) is ready to become The Rocketeer.

moviegoers as film's newest James Bond. The Welsh actor has a long string of stage roles to his credit, and his first film was *The Lion in Winter* with Katharine Hepburn and Peter O'Toole.

Before moving into the director's chair, Johnston, a trained commercial artist, worked on the *Star Wars* trilogy. He's the guy who designed not only many of the spaceships, but also Yoda and the Ewoks. Johnston also earned an Academy Award for visual effects for his contributions to *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The action-packed nature of *The Rocketeer* is second nature to him.

"The special effects include going from live action to an optical effect to an animation effect, then back to live action," Johnston says. "The big concern was making sure there was a seamless blend of techniques."

Los Angeles in 1938 wasn't the smoggy metropolis it is today, so Johnston and his crew selected Santa Maria, California to double for the city. "L.A. in the late 1930s was little more than a desert valley with hills and trees and orange groves," says Larry Franco, executive producer for the film.

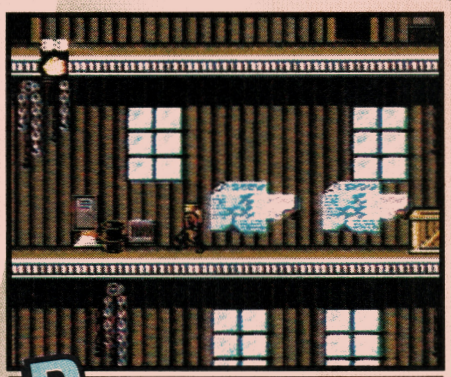
The same care was taken with costumes, which closely follow those in the original comic strip. "We ultimately made about 40 Rocketeer jackets," says costume designer Marilyn Vance-Straker, an Oscar nominee for *The Untouchables*. "There were so many unique functions required of the garment. One had to have a panel that opened up with a parachute inside; others had equally important and different features built inside."

"The element that makes this project stand out from other films being made," says producer Charles Gordon, "is that we're making a movie, not just a vehicle for a movie star. In this case, the movie itself is the star."

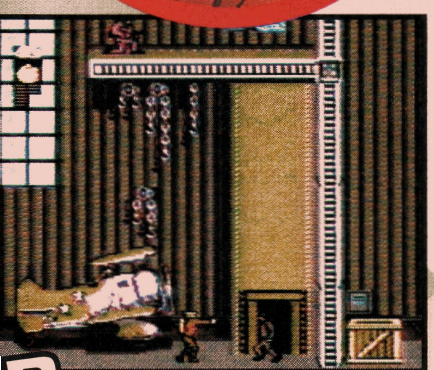
GP

the ROCKETEER!

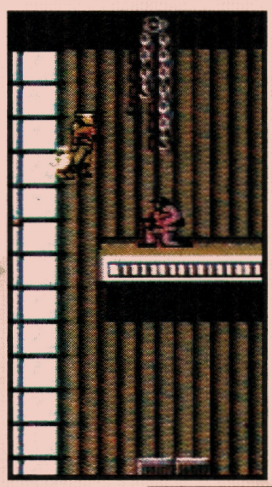
Cliff Secord discovers the mysterious rocket pack. If he knew the trouble that pack's going to cause, he might forget he ever saw it — then again, he might not. He is, after all, a hero in the making....



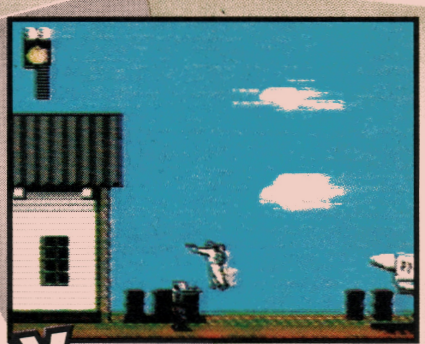
Proximity mines detonate when you get close to them, throwing shrapnel at the level of your head. Keep standing until the mines explode, then quickly duck so the shrapnel flies by.



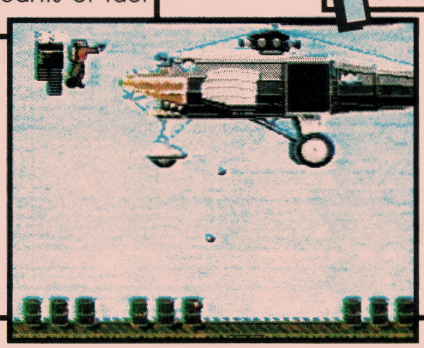
Brawlers never stop charging out of this doorway — and they all leave something behind when you kill them, mostly valuable fuel. Stand here and keep punching until you've got the maximum amounts of fuel and life.



You're finally ready for your first flight, but it's a pretty short one. Don't tangle with the shooters on the platforms on your way up, just fly straight up and over.



You run into other guys with rocket packs on the airfield. They're a little easier to fight if you stay on the ground. Run toward them and attack as they descend.



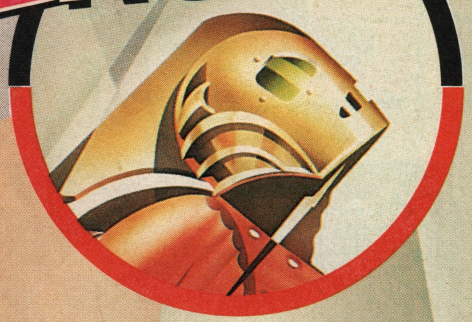
To defeat the fighters that drop out of the Gyrocopter, stand in the left corner, jump the Gyro's bullets, and shoot the brawlers to collect fuel. When you're ready, take off and destroy the Gyro's engine.

Jeff Lundrigan

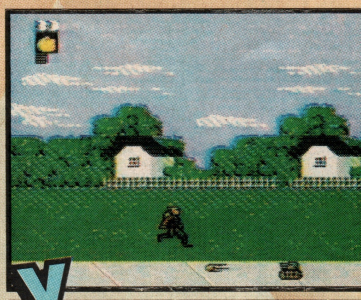
Stunt pilot Cliff Secord didn't consider himself a hero, just an ordinary guy making the best of a bad situation. When his plane is caught in a fierce shootout between FBI G-men and a mysterious gang of crooks, it's completely totaled. But as he and his mechanic, Peevey, try to fix the plane, they find something — something that's *not* a fragment of the plane.

It seems that one of the crooks stashed an odd-looking contraption in the cockpit of Cliff's plane before he fled the FBI gunmen. The object looked like a rocket engine, but it was attached to a shoulder harness. It didn't take Cliff and Peevey long to figure out how to use the rocket pack, but many questions remained: Where had it come from? Who built it? What was it for?

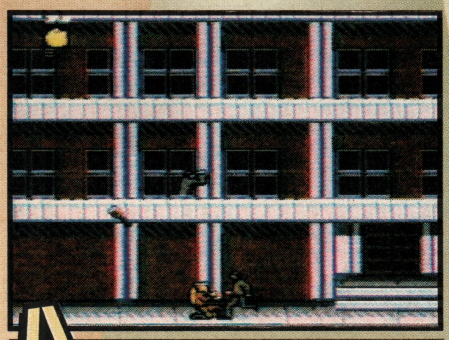
the ROCKETEER



Once you've escaped the airfield, head for Peevey's house. You must fight your way out, however, because it doesn't take long for Sinclair's men to track you there.



You have your first encounter with RoboTanks — a sort of garden-variety mobile artillery — on the sidewalks outside Peevey's house. Jump over them so you can attack them from behind.

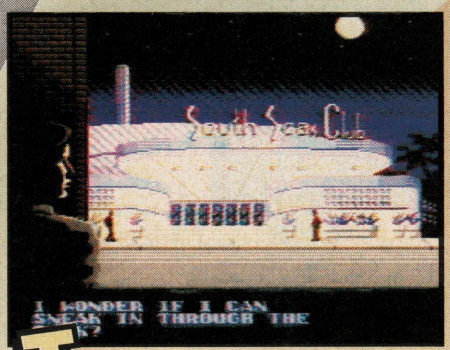


As you make your way to the Bulldog Cafe, watch out for the guys throwing grenades at you from the windows. They can't hit you if you keep moving.

At the Bulldog Cafe, Peevey gives you the bad news: Sinclair has kidnapped Jenny! It's either give up the pack or try to rescue her — and you're not about to give up the pack.

Once you've gathered fuel, take to the air again and fly over the city's rooftops. There's no time for sightseeing — beware of enemy rocketmen, homing air mines, and mortar launchers.

Lothar is on the roof of the club. He's basically a bigger, nastier brawler than anyone you've encountered so far. Wait for him to charge, then hit him before he can hit you.



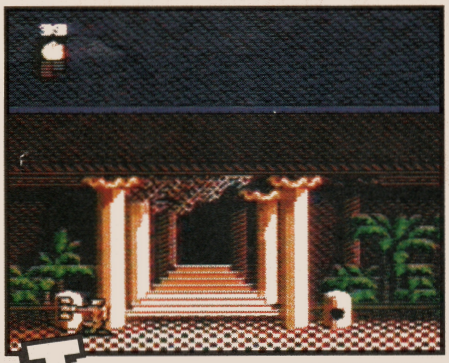
The South Seas Club is where all the really *big* stars hang out. Since you're not a big star, you must go in through the service entrance.

No sooner have you made it inside the club than Sinclair makes his exit — taking Jenny at gunpoint. It's time to blow this joint.

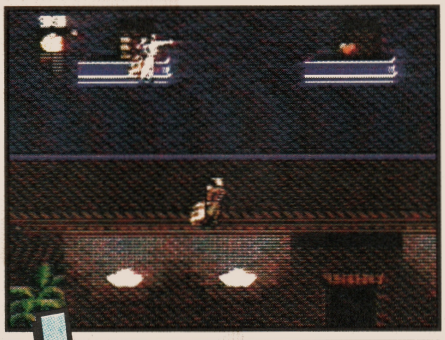
But there was no time to ponder questions. Legendary movie star (and secret Nazi collaborator) Neville Sinclair is behind the theft of the rocket pack — and he wants it back. Cliff manages to escape Sinclair's men by using the pack, but his girlfriend, Jenny Blake, isn't so lucky. Now Sinclair is holding Jenny to try to force Cliff to surrender the rocket pack.

Donning the pack and a special helmet Peevey has designed to help him steer, Cliff flies off to rescue Jenny and smash the enemy spy ring. He's become The Rocketeer!

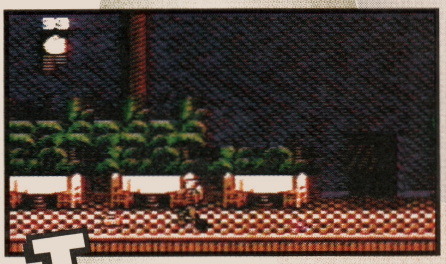
This game, based on an old comic strip, is divided into six chapters, with short cartoon sequences in between to advance the story. You basic goal in each chapter is to fight your way



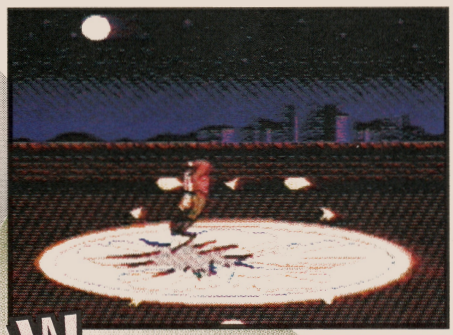
These two posts located at the club's entrance both contain bonus items. Crack them open and grab what's inside.



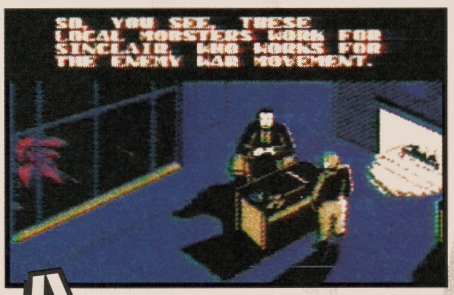
It's best to fly through the club. Not only is it a little safer, but there are also lots of bonus items up among the rafters.



This flashing gas can is your ticket out. There's no boss to this stage — the enemies just keep coming until you've grabbed the fuel. But once your rocket pack kicks into overdrive, you're gone!



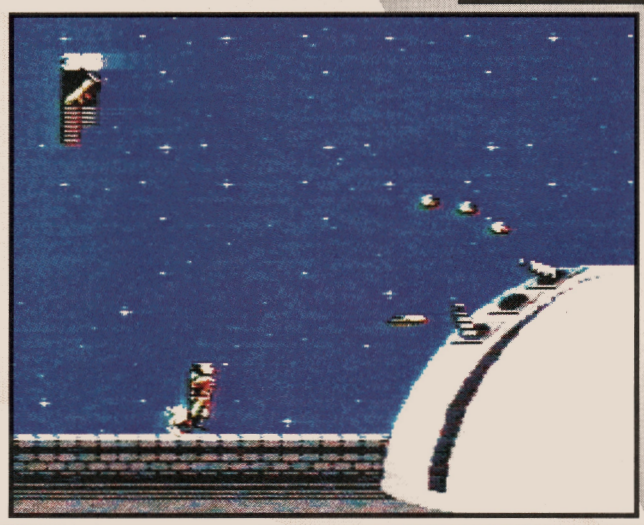
With all the exits blocked there's only one way out: through the roof! But now you've lost Sinclair's trail.



After leaving the club, you're taken to see a "famous industrialist millionaire." He's the one who built the rocket pack, and he can explain a thing or two about Sinclair as well.

When thugs surround the millionaire's house, you must escape through the woods. You can fly up the cliffs instead of jumping — just watch out for killer bats.

Watch out for branches falling from the trees. Step under the trees, then back away to dodge the branches. *Sometimes* you can run past the branches — but you'd better be fast.



Make your way into the observatory through the roof. Kill the brawlers to gain fuel and ammo, then knock out the guns with your bazooka.

through Sinclair's men. You face about two dozen different kinds of enemies, each with its own pattern of attack. As you advance, the enemies get more aggressive, but their patterns don't change much. If you learn the patterns and how to combat each one, you shouldn't have much trouble earning victory.

There are six weapons at your disposal, ranging from your fist to a bazooka. You always carry these weapons with you, but you must find bullets to use in them — and each weapon requires different amounts of ammo per shot. Try to use your fists as much as possible so you can hold that ammo-eating bazooka in reserve for an emergency.

Some beaten enemies drop hearts for life energy, ammunition, and — most importantly —

the ROCKETEER

Bandai
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166th Street;
Cerritos, CA
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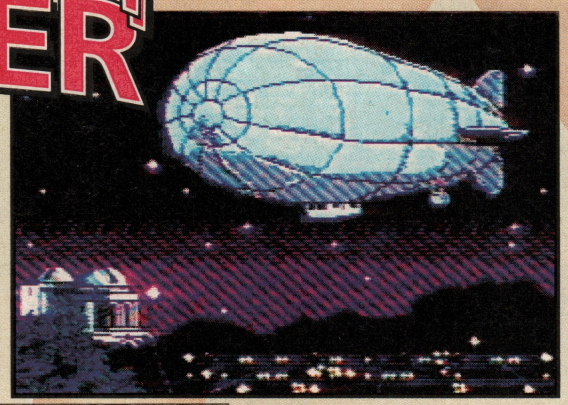
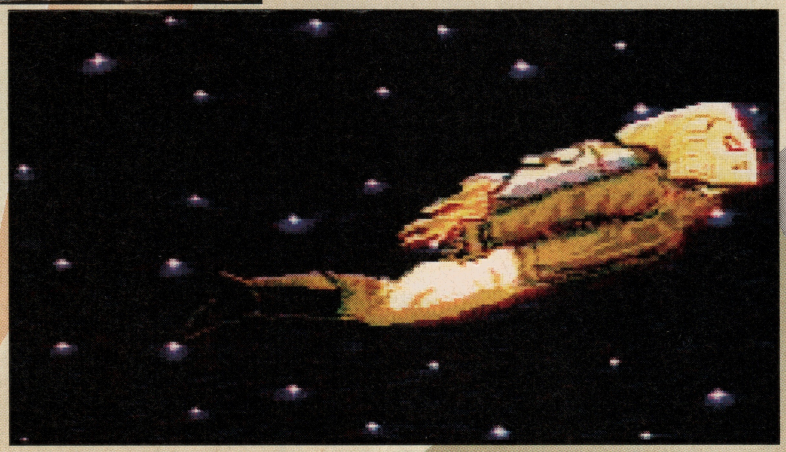
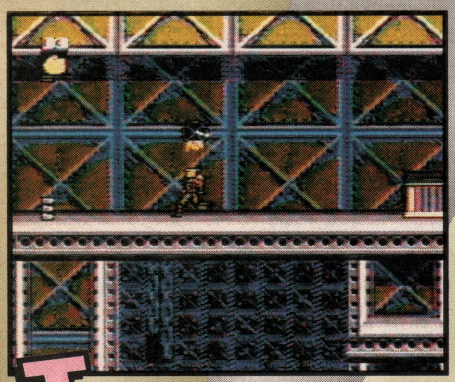


Just when it looks like you're getting close to your goal, Sinclair springs another trick — an armored zeppelin getaway vehicle.

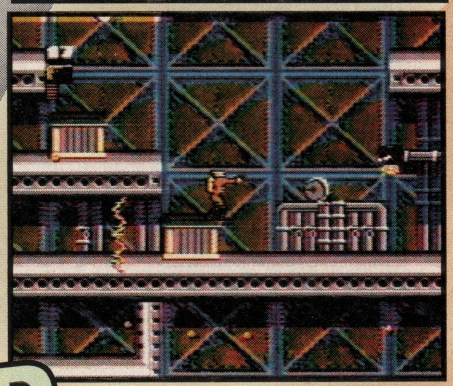
Before you can do anything to stop him, Sinclair grabs Jenny — again — and climbs aboard the zeppelin. Another escape!



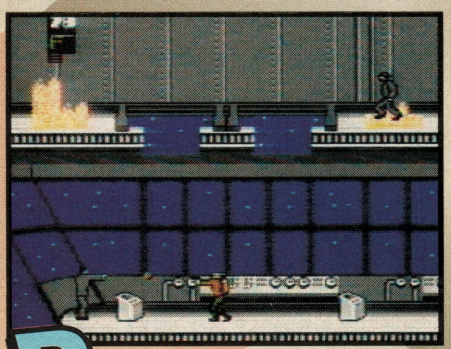
It takes every drop of fuel you've got, but you fly after the zeppelin. If you can catch it, Sinclair's options have finally run out.



The aerial machine guns aren't as tough as they look. They can fire only at certain angles, and they're so slow that you can run right underneath them without being hit.



Destroy the radar dish to shut down the electrofield barriers — it's the only way to continue your mission.



Don't try to duck during your final showdown with Sinclair — you'll never stand up again if you do. Remain standing and keep shooting at him. You may get shot a few times, but you'll live.

fuel for the rocket pack. Flying is an absolute necessity during some parts of the game, so get the hang of it quickly. Unfortunately, your rocket pack is a real gas-guzzler. If you don't keep an eye on the fuel gauge, chances are you'll end up dropping out of the sky, probably right in front of guys who don't like you. And they have guns.

The Rocketeer's graphics are top-notch — among the best we've seen lately for the NES. While the action isn't completely original — it falls into the same run-jump-shoot category as a lot of other games, and bears more than a passing resemblance to Jaleco's *Rocket Ranger* — it's well-handled, not *too* difficult to play, and looks so good you're not likely to complain. Its pulp-serial, high-adventure setting is a real treat, too. **GP**

THE BARD'S TALE

Jeff Lundrigan

The town of Skara Brae was once peaceful and prosperous — a nice place to live. But then an evil sorcerer, Mangar, cursed the town and doomed it to the bleakness of eternal winter. When the city gates were frozen shut, the people of Skara Brae were trapped inside, easy prey for the hordes of vicious monsters that suddenly appeared.

But the city was frozen by more than just ice and snow. It was also frozen by fear. No one seemed willing to stand up to Mangar and try to put an end to the city's curse. But in the heart of the city, behind the walls of the Adventurer's Guild, there were still a few brave souls. The small band of wizards and warriors is young, inexperienced, and untested, yet it's ready to take whatever risks are necessary to defeat Mangar and free Skara Brae.

The Bard's Tale was a groundbreaking PC game when it was released around five years ago, and now you can encounter much the same challenge in this NES version. It's one of the first "mature" role-playing games (RPGs) for Nintendo. Not as visually interesting as *Dragon Warrior* or *StarTropics*, *The Bard's Tale* is a get-down-to-business RPG.

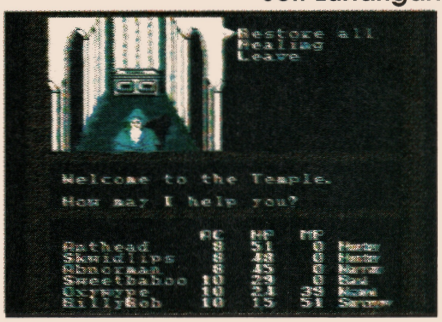
Be prepared to put in a lot of time and effort, though — *The Bard's Tale* is fairly large and detailed. And you should polish your fighting skills, too — you're going to be faced with a running battle against the creatures of Skara Brae. You can't take two steps in, above, or below the city without getting attacked by groups of monsters.

But this constant combat isn't a bad thing. You gain battle experience when you defeat monsters, and with experience comes power. Unless you

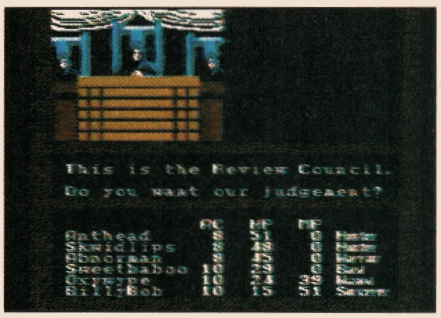
Always outfit your party with the best weapons and armor you can afford. It doesn't pay to be stingy — and it can even be fatal.

HINT

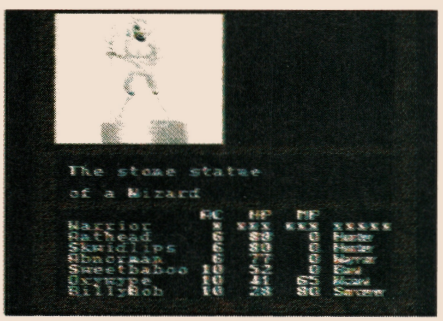
The Review Council raises your trait scores (strength, intelligence, and so on) as well as experience level. Save the game before going to the council, then advance your characters one at a time. If they don't raise the trait you want, you can reset the game and try again.



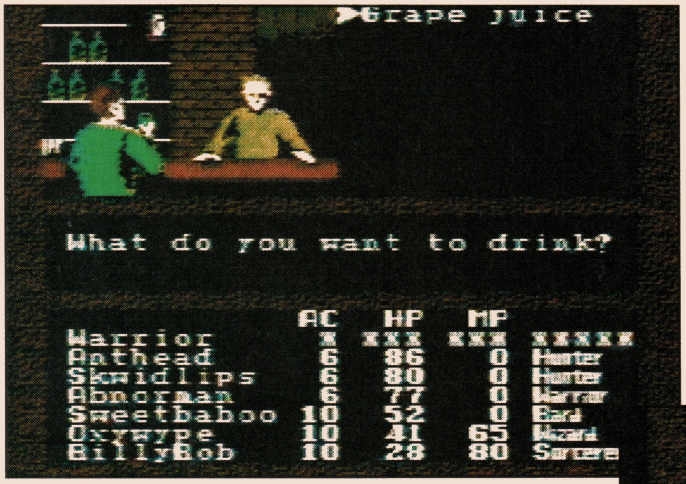
You can heal any affliction in the temple — including death. If you've got the cash, you can also restore all your hit points and magic points.



The Review Council raises characters' levels and grants new spells. It also restores hit and magic points for any character obtaining a new level.

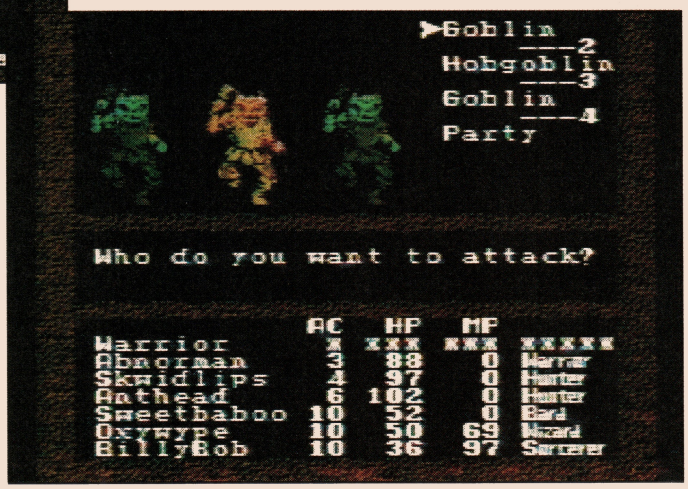


Guardian statues are found around Skara Brae. They come to life and attack your party, and you must defeat them to pass by.



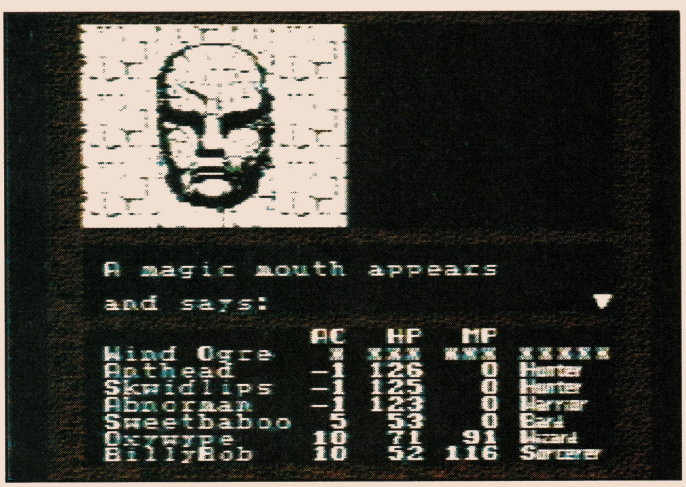
If you order grape juice in the Scarlet Bard pub, you're shown downstairs into the cellar, which contains the entrance to the sewers. Believe it or not, this is the first leg of your journey.

Each group of creatures attacks once, so concentrate your attacks on a single group until it's defeated. This cuts down on the number of times you're attacked.

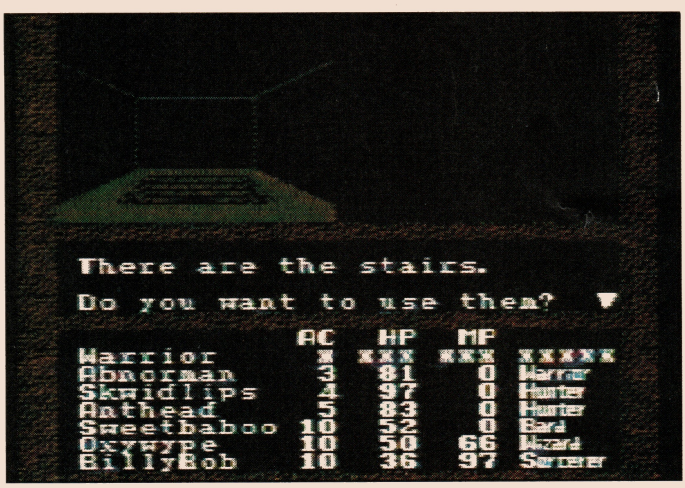


learn to cast powerful spells and wield strong weapons, you stand no chance to defeat Mangar.

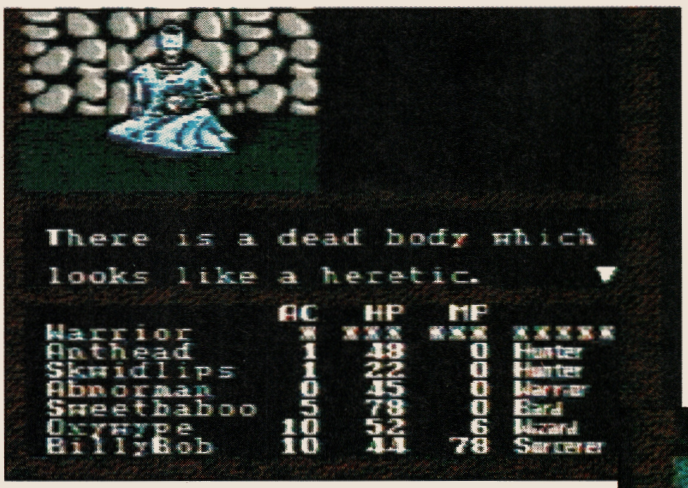
You begin the game by building a party of characters in the Adventurer's Guild. Each character has individual statistics, so if you don't like the vitality or intelligence of your character, choose another. Warriors and Hunters should have high strength and vitality points so they can do (and take) a lot of damage. But intelligence is what's important for Wizards and Sorcerers. The higher the intelligence score, the more magic points they receive at each new experience level. Wizards especially need every point they can get because



Magic mouths are found in the mazes. They give clues — usually in the form of riddles. Write down what they say so you can remember it later.

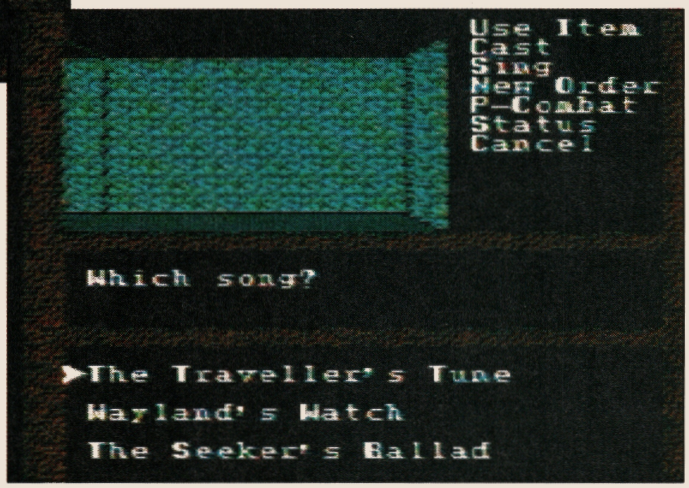


Your primary goal in each maze is to find the stairs up (or down) to the next floor. Make sure you explore the entire floor before you continue to the next.



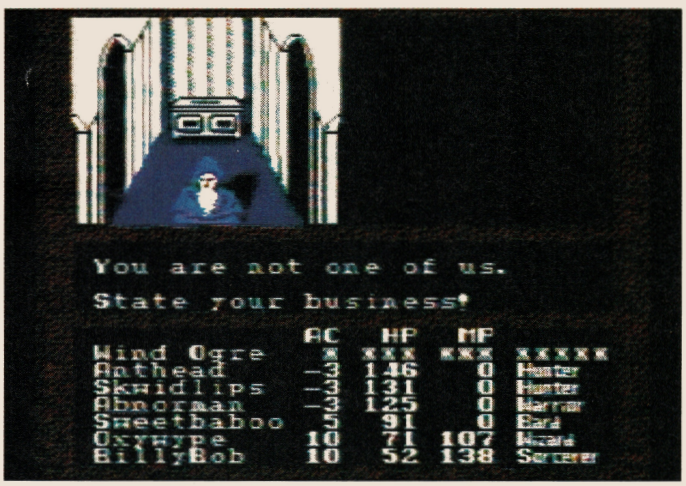
The body of a long-dead heretic lies in the deepest level of the sewers. The item that proves he's a heretic proves that you're one, too — which can be useful.

The Bard can sing a Traveller's Tune, which teleports the party back to the Adventurer's Guild. This makes it possible to stay in a maze until your party is near death, then leave safely.

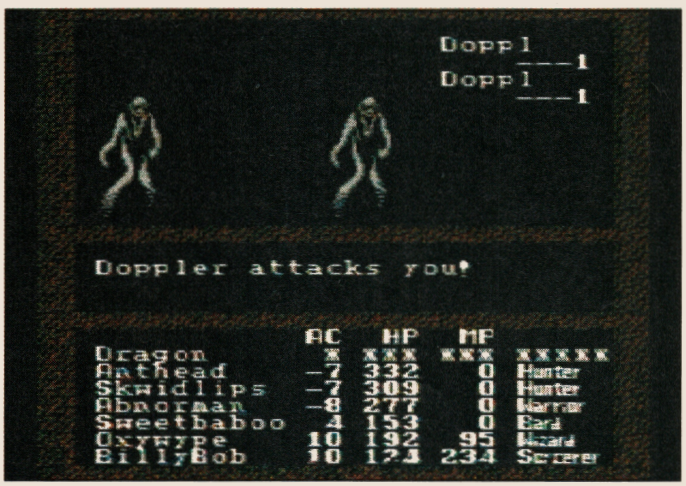


they can cast not only healing spells, but powerful attack spells as well.

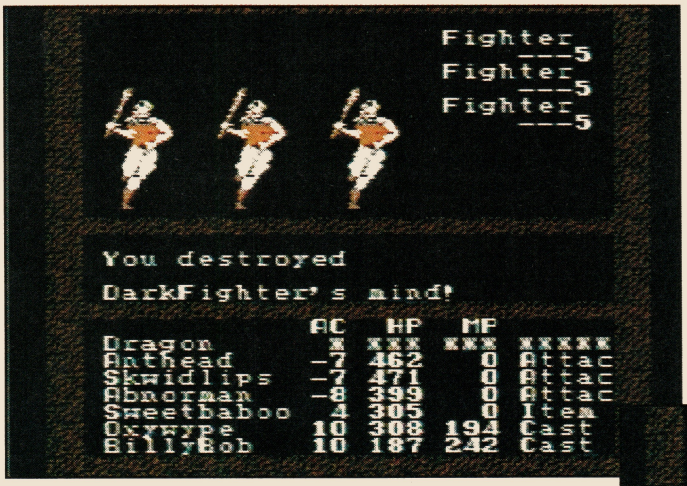
Of all the classes, Rogues are the least useful. They don't fight especially well, and their only important skill is the ability to disarm traps. On the lower levels, the party occasionally needs someone to help it survive dart traps or raise the money to cure someone who's been turned to stone or possessed, but at higher levels the party members take care of themselves. When you reach the higher levels, you should replace your rogue with a hunter. Although this new member has a lower experience level than the rest of the party, he'll quickly catch up if he's outfitted well.



The Temple of Tarjan, called the Mad God, is a place for heretics. Show the priest proof that you're a heretic and he'll let you into the catacombs.

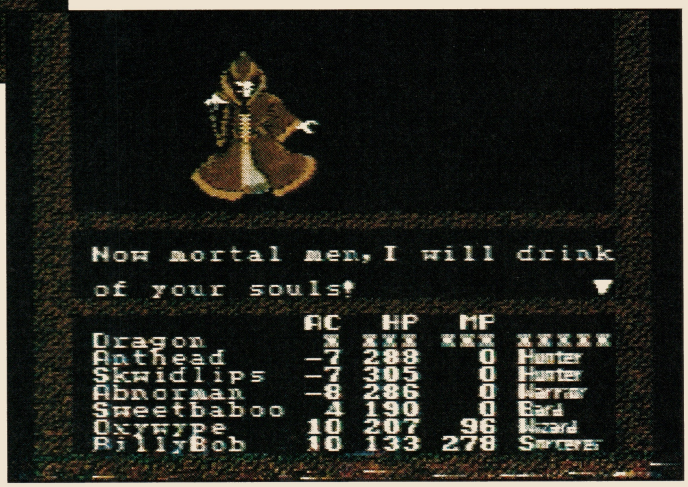


When dopplers possess a party member, he begins attacking the others. Cure him by entering Party Combat and attacking him until he's down to one hit point.



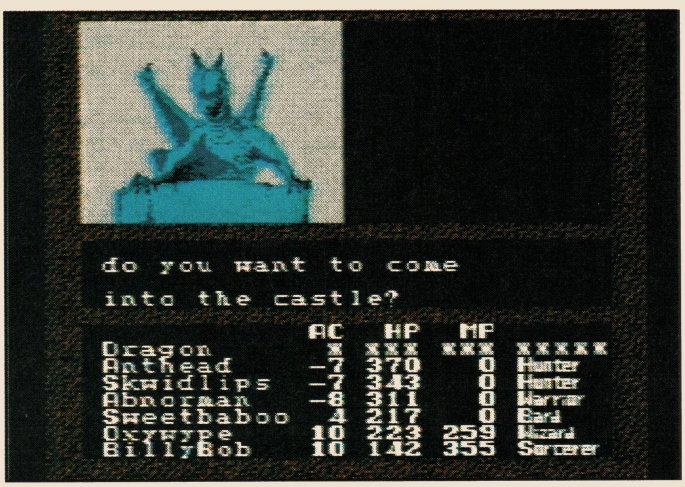
Certain Sorcerer spells can destroy a creature's mind, instantly killing its body as well. Of course, the creature must actually *have* a mind for the spell to work, and some minds are too strong to be destroyed.

Aildrek, the undead High Priest of Tarjan, can be found in the heart of the catacombs. He's got Tarjan's great Crystal Eye, but he won't just give it to you.

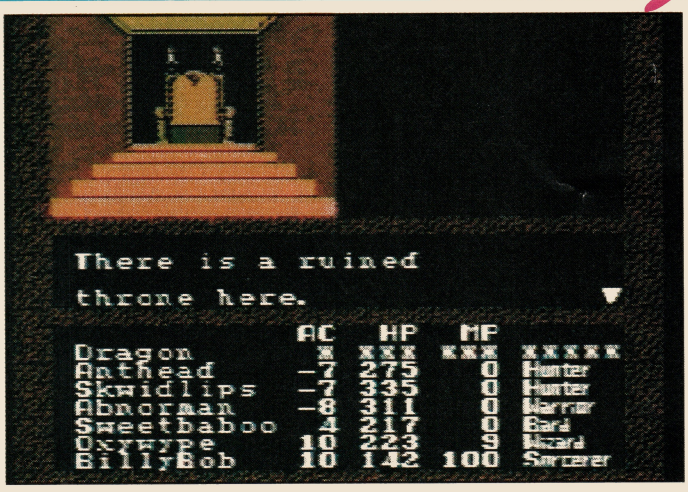


Sorcerers can also help supplement your party. They can summon illusory creatures to fight on your side. Use them right away — the summoned creature not only provides an extra attack per combat round, but it also draws some attacks that would otherwise injure party members.

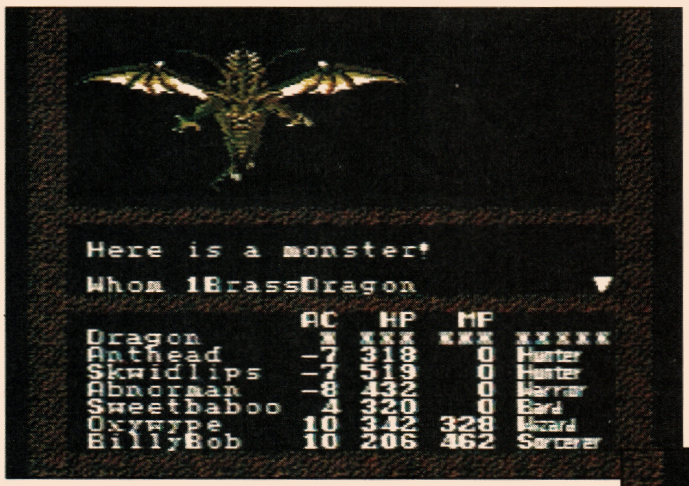
The Bard's Tale is as much a game of resource management as it is a fantasy RPG. You must keep close tabs on your party's abilities, carefully nurture the party members along, and develop them into the elite band of adventurers required to defeat Mangar the Wicked if you hope to win the game.



The castle entrance is guarded by a dragon, but if you've got the Eye, he lets you in.

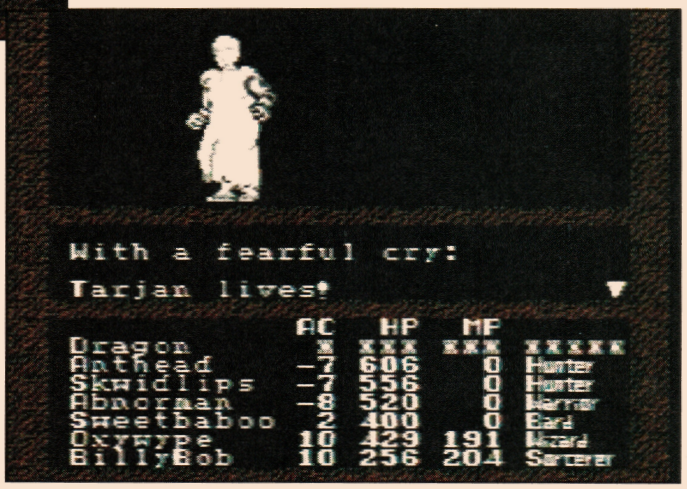


The throne hides a secret passage. You need the Whitemantle to open the throne. Look for it in the guard's room, to the right of the entrance hall.



The upper floors of the castle contain Brass Dragons. But they aren't as tough as they look because they only attack one by one.

Tarjan comes back to life when re-united with his Crystal Eye. When you beat him, you'll find the Crystal Key. Use the key to open Kylearn's Tower.

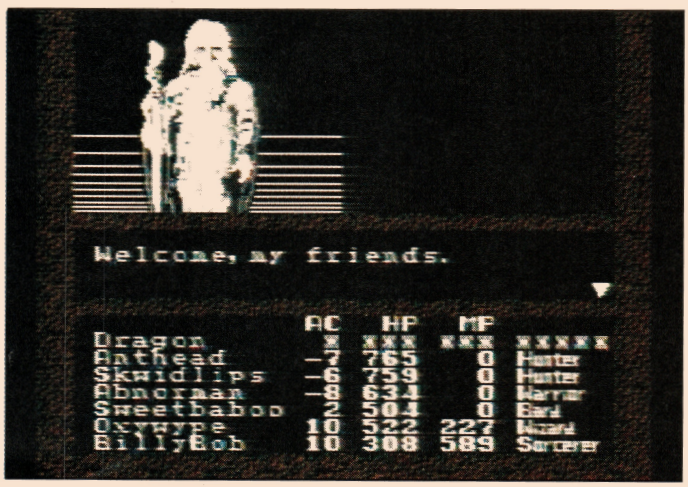


HINT

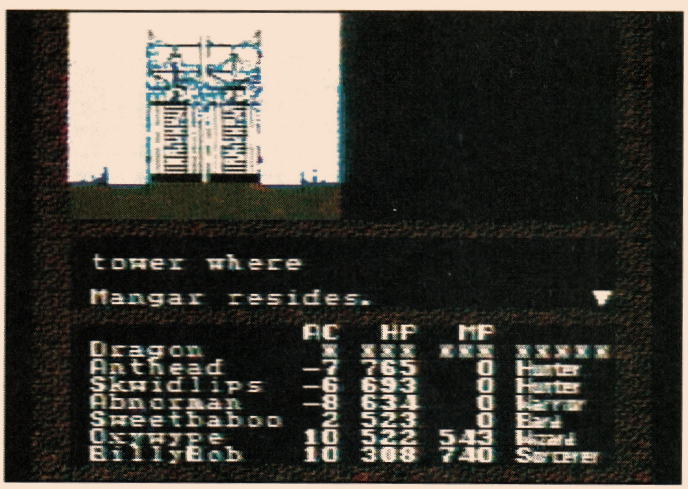
If you're careful, none of the mazes in Skara Brae needs mapping. Mangar's Tower, however, contains numerous teleport squares, and some areas look exactly like others. Make maps of the 16x16 grid floors, and use "Scry Sight" often to make sure you know where you are.

FCI

150 East 52nd Street; 34th Floor;
New York, NY 10022



Kylearn is imprisoned on the top floor of his tower. One of the few friendly beings you meet, he gives you the Jade Key to Mangar's Tower.



Fight your way past the guardian statue to the entrance of Mangar's Tower. Are you ready for the traps, tricks, and dangerous creatures within?

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

Leslie Mizell

The Indiana Jones movies were patterned after the old-style serial cliffhangers — short movies in which the hero got into a life-threatening situation at the end of every ten-minute installment. They were short on plot and long on action. The videogame version of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* is much the same.

A busy—but boring — day spent grading papers and consulting with students is interrupted when Indiana Jones gets a package in the mail. It's his father's Grail diary, containing every note, every sketch, every clue from his father's lifelong search for the chalice Jesus used during the Last Supper. Indiana knows something is amiss. But without your help, he'll never find out what's wrong. The action in this boring day is about to pick up.

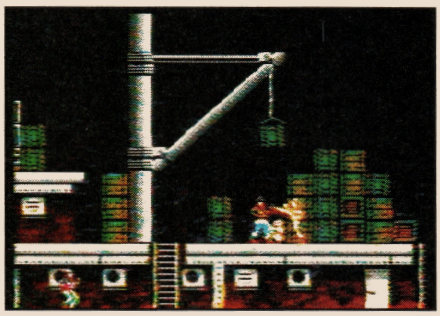
Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade basically follows the action of the 1989 movie, even including digitized images from the Harrison Ford–Sean Connery film itself. As the whip-wielding hero, you must find the Holy Grail before it's uncovered by the Nazis. Although your *final* goal is to find the Grail, there are several mini-quests and rescues to complete along the way.

The action is non-linear, so you can choose the order in which you wish to take on the missions. But be warned! The path you take might make the game more difficult. The first of the six scenarios you attempt is automatically played at a difficulty level of 1. If you win that game, the next scenario is played at 2, and so on. To finish the game quickly, you should play the hardest scenarios first (even going for the Grail right off the bat!) and leave the easiest for last.

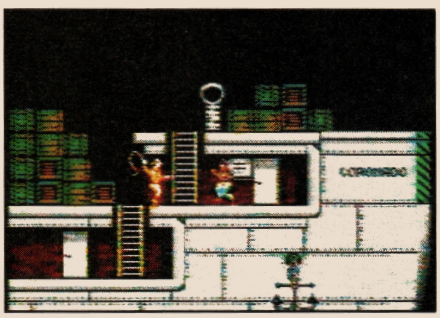
HINT

You escape from Berlin on a motorcycle, with enemy soldiers in hot pursuit. The road forks eight times. One path usually leads to a chasm that can be jumped, while the other leads to the same gorge but offers no safe landing spot. The safe paths are (in order): left, right, right, right, left, right, right, left.

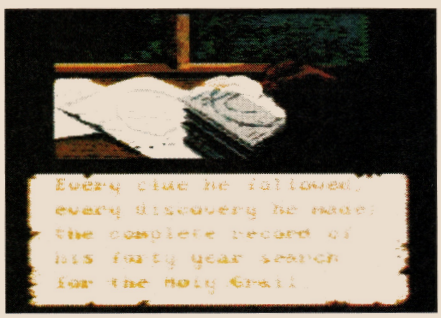
The Cross of Coronado was stolen from Indy when he was a child. At last he has a chance to even the score.



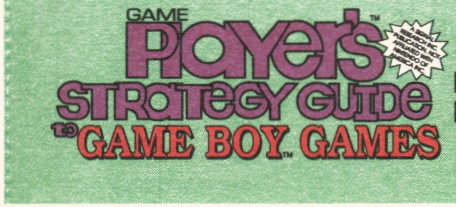
The flying kick is a good defense. You'll bounce off the wall, spin around, and (hopefully) send your enemy sailing.



You can kill enemies with one blow if you hit them with your whip. When the enemy counter reaches 00, you're ready to face the captain.



When the Grail diary arrives in the mail, you know something's wrong. Your father would never have parted with it unless he was in trouble.



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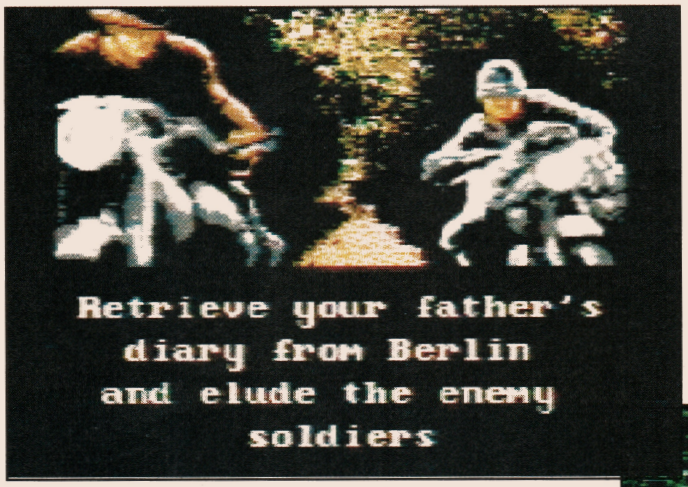
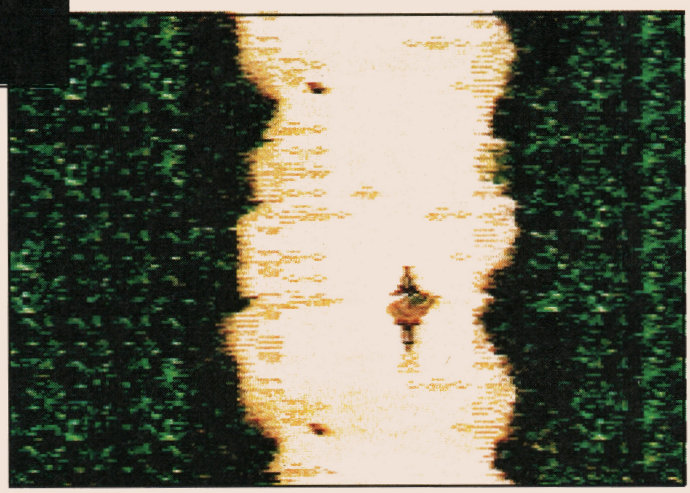


If you fail during any stage, you lose the diary and must go to Berlin to retrieve it. Your motorcycle getaway is the most difficult sequence in the game.

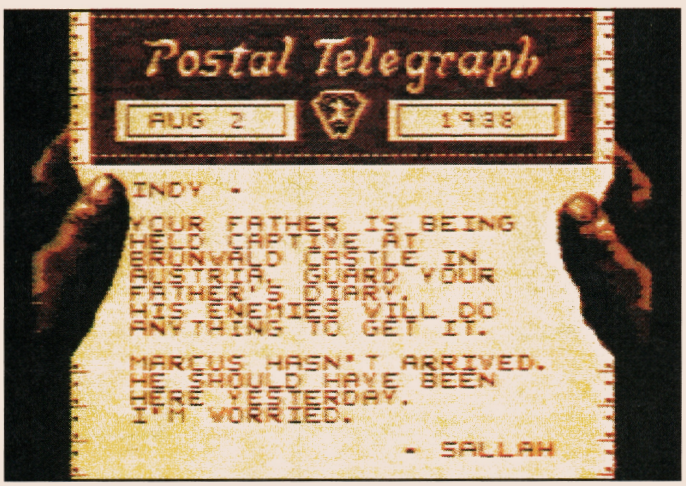
Even when you're not being chased by enemy soldiers, you must watch out for gun turrets, tanks parked in the road, and washed-out bridges.



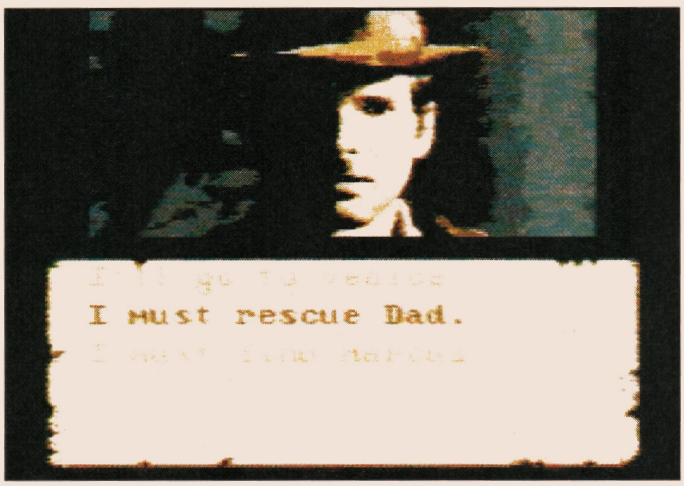
But if you want a true challenge, play the game in the same order as the movie sequences.

In the first scenario, you must steal the Cross of Coronado from a cargo ship. Using your fists, your flying kick, and your whip — your only weapons throughout the game — you must fight off thugs on three ship levels, beat the captain to get the cross, then jump overboard before the ship explodes. The number of sailors you fight depends on the difficulty level.

The Venetian scenario, the only sequence you can't play more than once, is a puzzle that's vital to finding the Grail. You must com-



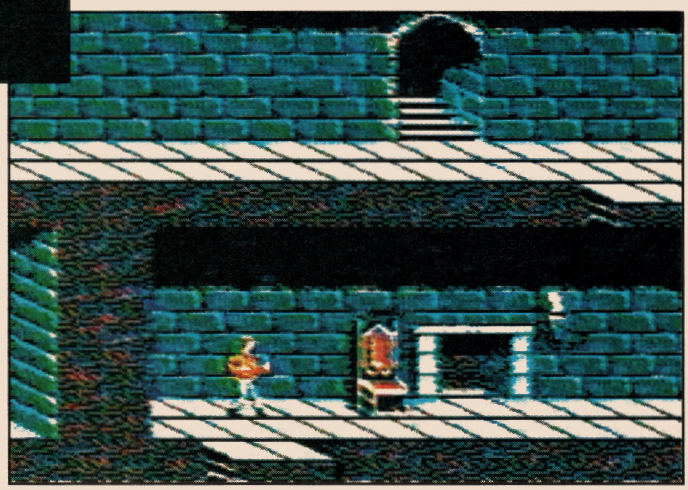
OK, you've got the Grail back, but now your dad's been kidnapped by Nazis.



Before each scenario, you're given choices — a sort of level-select. The order in which you choose the scenarios affects the difficulty of the game.

Brunwald Castle is now a stronghold for the Nazi forces. Rescuing your father is sure to require fighting off a few enemy soldiers.

It's not hard to search the castle because each hallway has a different marker on the wall. When you find the room with a fireplace, sit in the chair to uncover the secret exit.

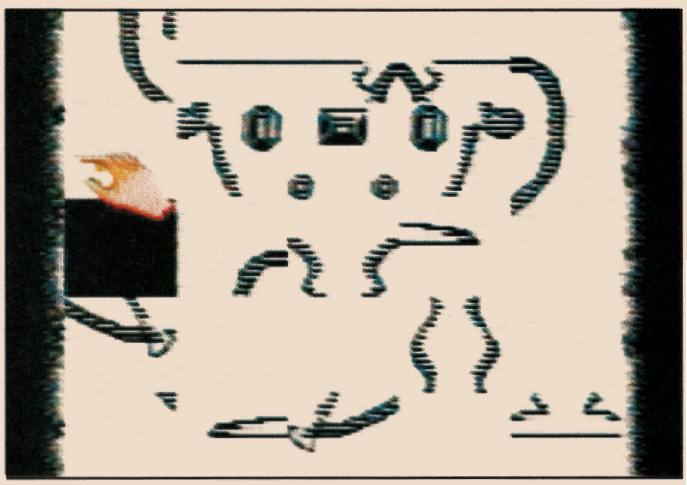


plete a jigsaw puzzle of the Grail while flames lick closer and closer to your heels. Fitting the handles, base, and stem together will help you identify the Grail when faced with almost-identical versions.

In Castle Brunwald, you must find your father in the mazelike passageways that are constantly patrolled by soldiers. In the desert of Iskenderun, you must rescue Marcus Brody from an enemy tank within a time limit.

When the Grail diary is stolen, you must travel to Berlin. Once you've grabbed the diary, you must escape by motorcycle, avoiding minefields, washed-out bridges, and enemy soldiers.

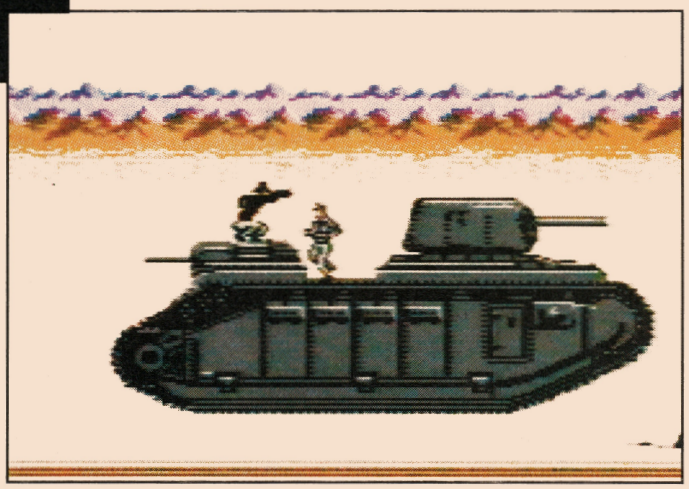
Every scenario you complete brings you one step closer to finding the Holy Grail. This mystic relic *can't* fall into the hands of Nazis.



You can play the Venice scenario only once. Solve the puzzle just as you would a tile puzzle. Remember — the earlier you go to Venice, the easier the puzzle is.

You must attempt another rescue in the desert of Iskenderun, where your colleague, Marcus Brody, is being held inside a tank.

The soldiers come out of the tank one at a time — always to the left. If you're careful, you can stand to the right and kick them as they land on the tank's treads.

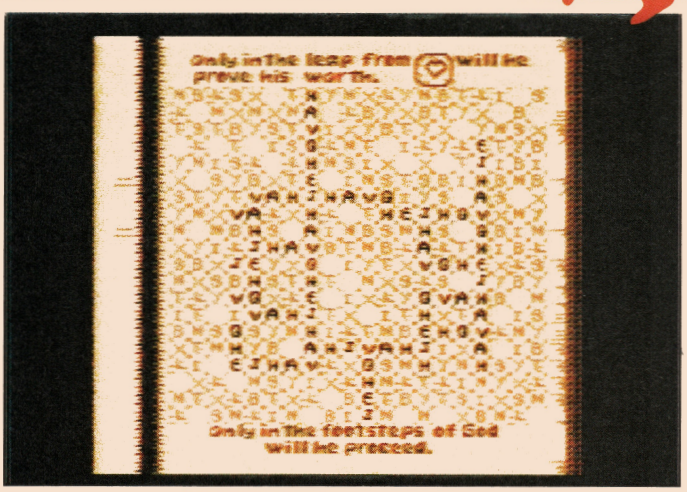


Your final trial is in the temple. Search the Grail diary for clues to reach the knight's chamber, then risk death by selecting the correct Grail from the dozen possible choices.

Lucasfilm developed two different *Indiana Jones* for PC — graphic and arcade versions. This NES translation from Taito could have been as complex as *Maniac Mansion* (another Lucasfilm original), but instead concentrates almost solely on the arcade sequences. Unfortunately, these action scenarios are so brief that no one, neither action nor strategy fans, is fully going to be satisfied with the result.

GP

Now three deadly trials are all that lie between you and the Grail.



The Grail diary shows you the path for "The Footsteps of God," the symbol for "The Leap from the Lion's Head," and the sketch of the Grail you completed in Venice.

One false step in the "Footsteps of God" trial, and you'll fall through the floor to your death.

This crusader has been guarding the Grail for hundreds of years. He's not likely to give it up to an unworthy hero.

HINT

Study the diary to see the safe path for the "Footsteps of God" trial and the correct symbol for the "Leap from the Lion's Head." Work quickly — your torch could burn out at any time, and a misstep means certain death. Remember to spell "Jehovah" with a "J," not an "I" as in the film.

Taito

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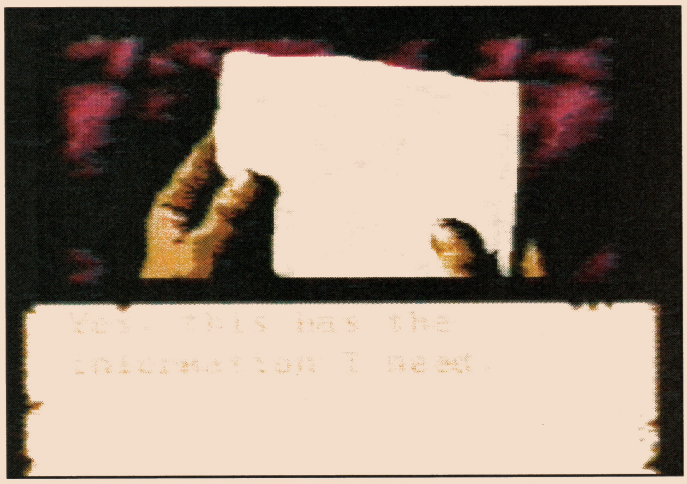


When you study the sketch of the Grail in the diary, be sure to notice the bowl (round or V-shaped), the handles (curved or S-shaped), the lip (fluted or smooth), and the base.

When faced with a dozen nearly identical chalices, it's tough to choose wisely. But the wrong choice spells the end of Indy — and his dad.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Lisa M. Bouchey

When Ariel left her ocean home at the end of the hit Disney movie, *The Little Mermaid*, she and Prince Eric were ready to live happily ever after. But her foe, Ursula, had other plans.

Without Ariel to bother her, the evil witch begins to take control of the entire ocean. Ariel's friends Flounder, Sebastian, and Scuttle tell her what Ursula's doing, and Ariel leaves her human form — and Prince Eric — to return to the sea in an attempt to stop the witch.

Capcom's game begins when Ariel dives back into the deep blue sea. It doesn't take long for her to realize that everything has changed since she's been gone. The guppies that had been her playmates have turned mean, and the bigger fish now desire mermaid-flavored fish food.

You must guide Ariel safely through five underwater levels on a search for Ursula. In the Coral Sea, starfish attack from hidden coral caves beneath you, while a shark guards the exit. As you search a sunken ship for hidden treasure, ghosts try to spook you by popping out of portholes, but they're easy to scare off with bubble attacks.

Watch your step in the icy ocean — you must flop onto ice floes to grab magic shells, but the ice is slippery and you might find yourself sliding back into the sea empty-handed. And mysterious fish hide beneath the sand in Volcano Bay, waiting for you to swim by before they attack. Schools of blowfish guard the twisting maze of warp tunnels in the Palace of Gloom. But once you've made your way safely though the palace, you're fin-to-face with Ursula.

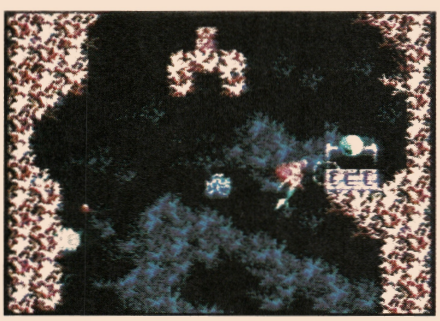
HINT

The warp tunnels in this game work differently from those in most games. If you warp through a door and notice that you're in a cavern you've already visited, go back through the same door. Instead of warping back where you came from, the door transports you to an area of the stage closer to the final boss.

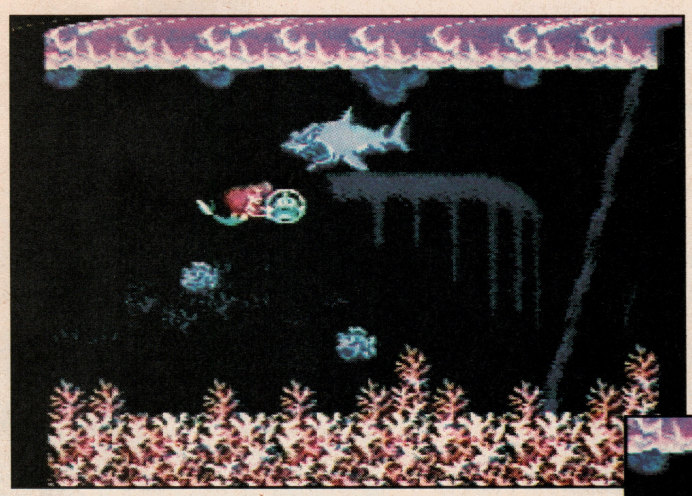
Ursula has plans to take over the entire ocean, and Ariel's friends know that their little mermaid friend is the only one who can save the sea.

Swish Ariel's tail twice to catch a fish in a bubble, then grab the bubble trap. If you throw it at another fishy fiend before the bubble bursts, you've knocked two enemies out of the way.

Sunken treasure chests are valuable because of the power balls hidden inside. But remember — you must have a magic shell to unlock the treasure.

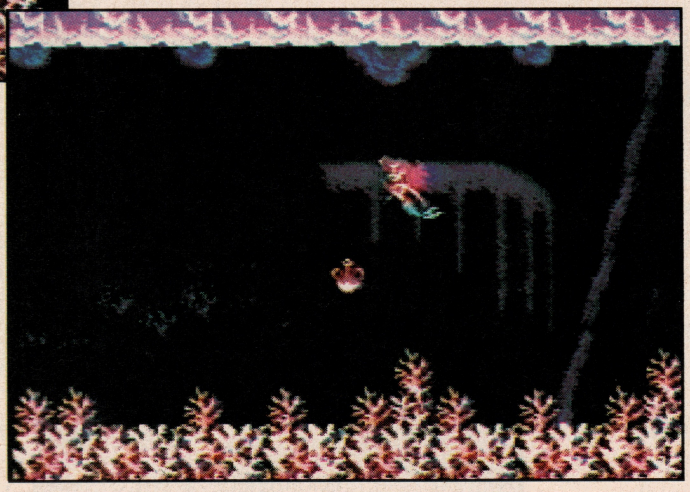


Red power balls help your tail make bigger bubbles, and green balls give you extra strength for leaping, diving, and moving obstacles out of your way.



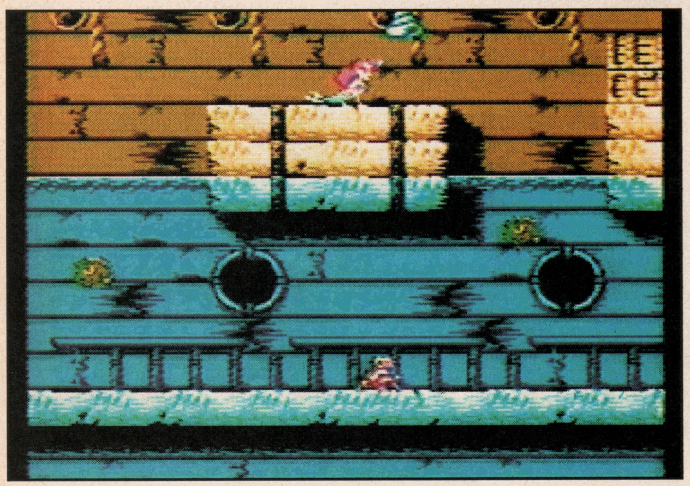
This shark looks hungry — and Ariel looks like the perfect lunch. Bubble-trap the smaller fish, then toss them at the shark.

When you defeat a level boss, a pot appears on the screen. Grab it to advance to the next level.

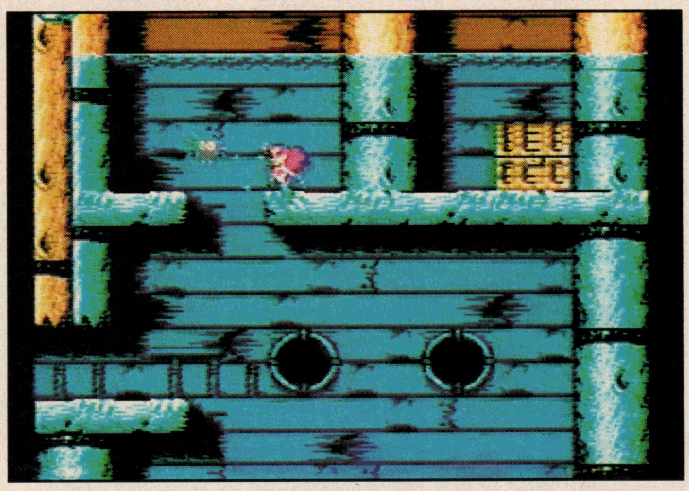


Your best defense against attackers is your strong tail. When small fish attack, swish your tail twice to catch the fish in a bubble, then swim to the bubble and grab it. It bursts in a few seconds, but if you throw the captured fish at another enemy before the bubble pops, you can kill two fish with one bubble. (If a whole school swims around just swish your tail to catch more than one fish in your bubble-trap.)

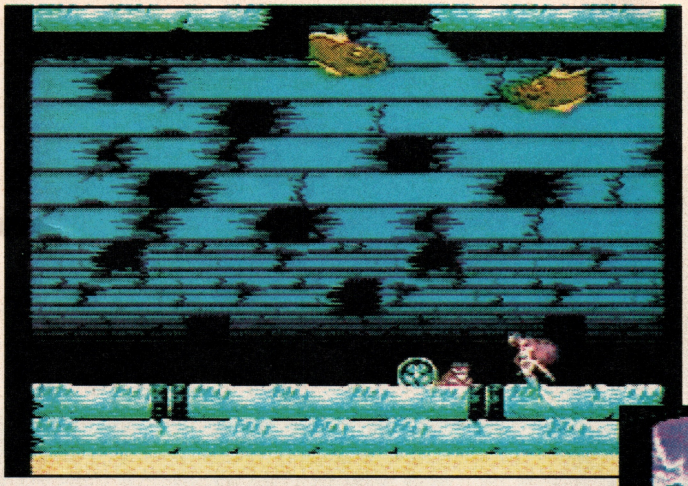
As you swim along, search the sea's sandy bottom, coral reefs, and rock ledges for magic shells. Swish the shell with your tail to make it float, then grab it. You can do more with these shells than hear the ocean.



In some spots, it's necessary to leap out of the water onto a ledge to grab a shell or open a treasure chest. Don't waste time — Ariel feels more at home in the water.

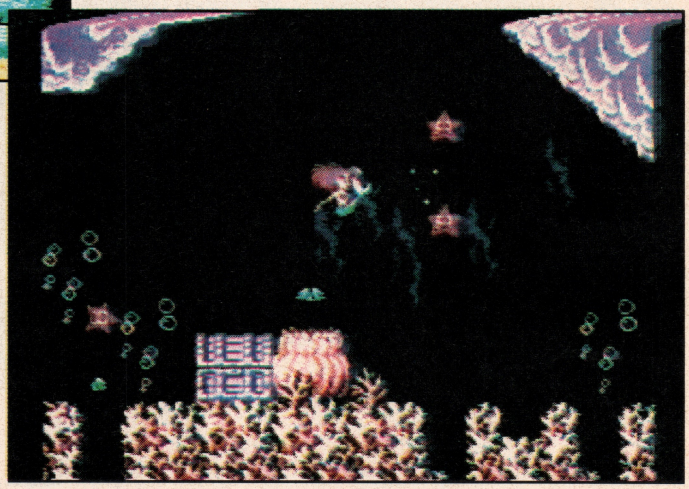


You can't catch these fish in your bubble trap, but if you whip them with your tail, they freeze in their tracks so you can swim around them.



To beat the boss of level 2, bubble-trap the crabs crawling about the sunken ship, then throw them at the moving heads. Keep it up until the pot is yours.

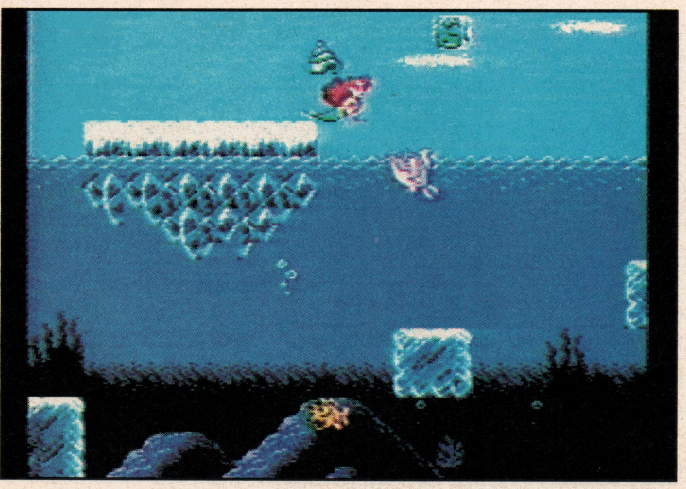
These starfish don't just swim around — they shoot out from underground caverns and circle up and around the swimming mermaid.



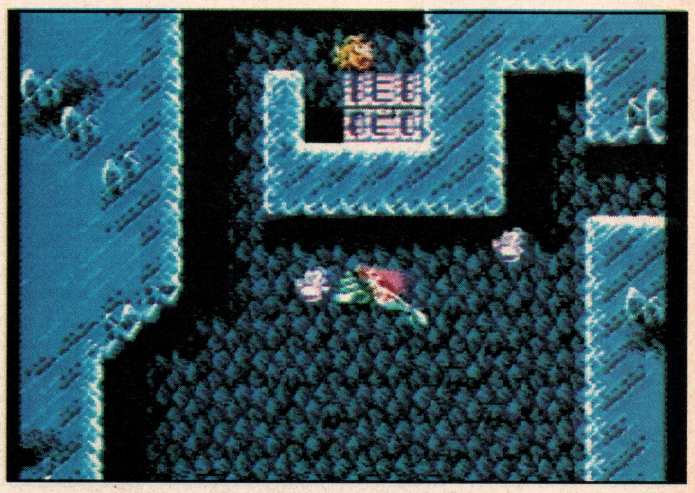
When you toss them at enemies, you stop them in their tracks. And you can also use shells to open sunken treasure chests.

When you open a treasure chest, grab the gleaming ball that floats out. Red balls make your bubbles faster and stronger so you can snare even the biggest fish, and green balls give you the strength to leap, dive, and push things so you can swim unobstructed.

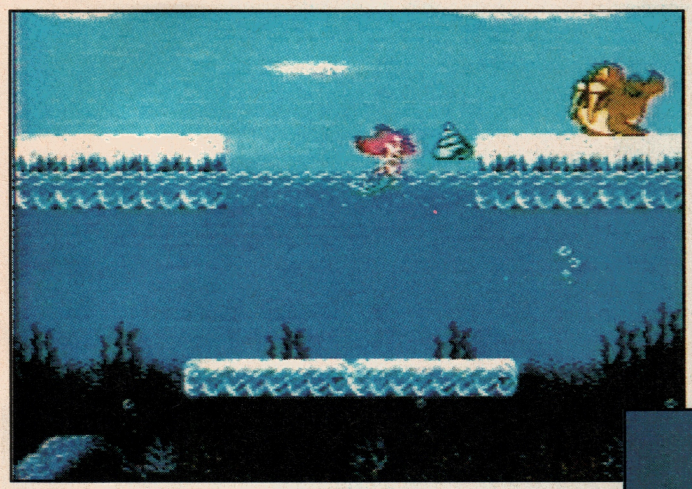
The dangers you encounter as you search each level are nothing compared to the bosses guarding the exits — they're the most dangerous foes in the game. To defeat them, catch smaller enemies in your



The ice ledges are slippery — if you don't move carefully, you'll slide off the ice floe without the treasure or magic shell.

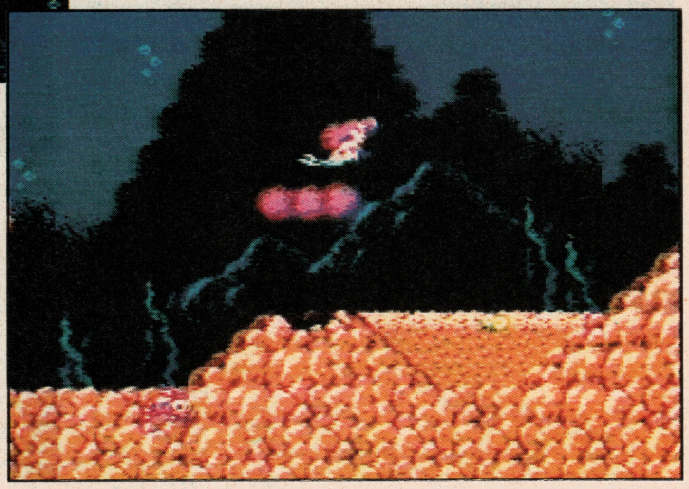


When you pick up a shell, hold on to it as long as possible. If you're holding a shell and run into a fish, the fish disappears from the screen.



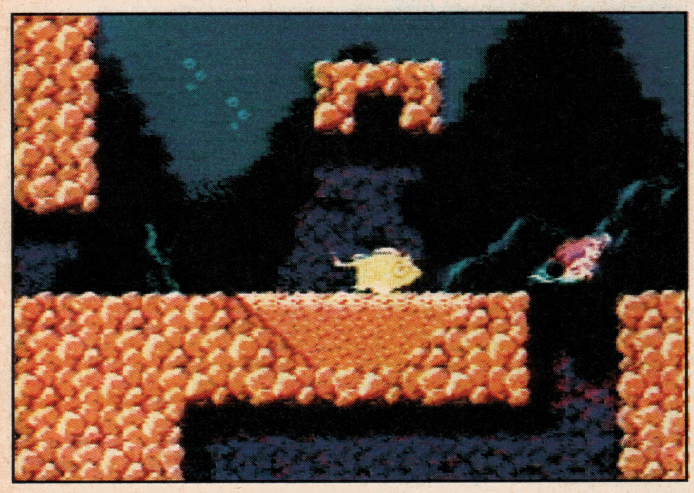
The walrus boss looks like he wants to play, but he's a little too rough for you. When he drops shells, pick them up and throw them back at him.

As you search Volcano Bay for hidden treasures and traps, watch out for lava explosions.

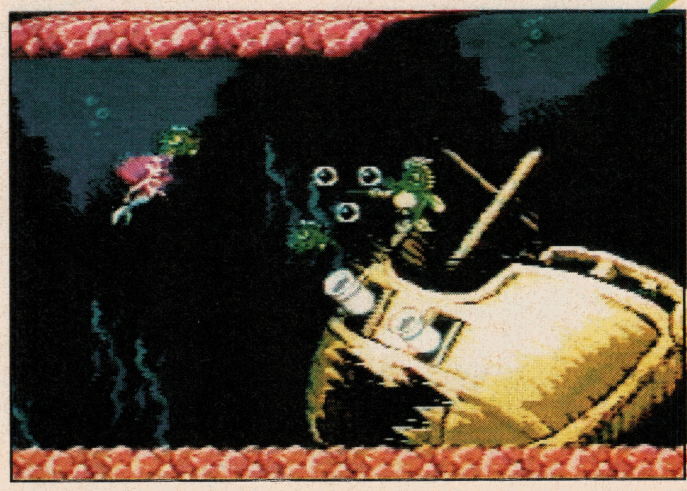


bubbles and throw them at the boss's weak spot—the same strategy works even when you face Ursula.

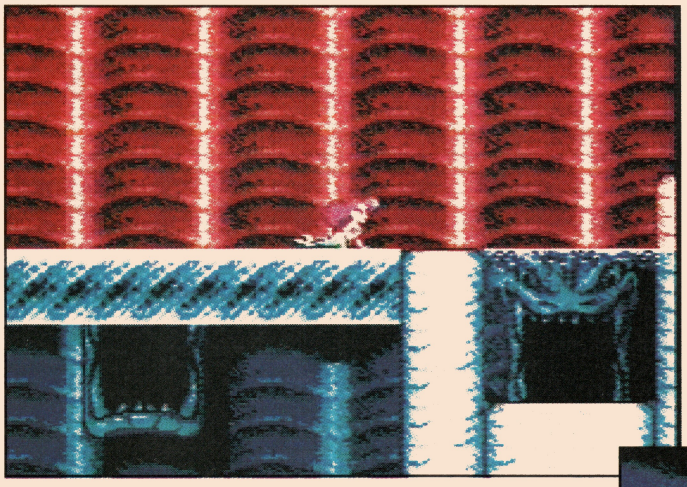
Capcom is aiming this game at girls, but anyone who enjoyed the Disney cartoon will have fun playing *The Little Mermaid*. Its colorful characters, sparkling graphics, nonviolent game play, and enchanting storyline make it a good family game. The action is occasionally challenging enough to test even the more experienced players.



Big, mean fish are waiting for you in this volcanic world. Don't swim too close to the bottom — you never know when fish are likely to dig out of the sand and attack.

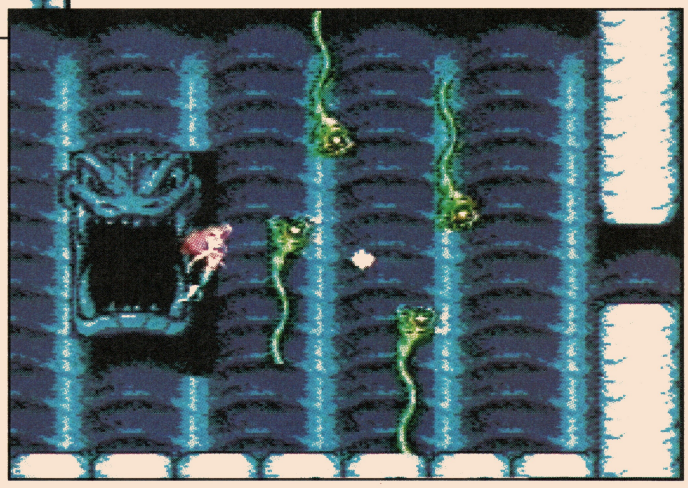


This Soldierfish defends the exit of Volcano Bay. Keep an eye on the cannons in the sunken ship — the Soldierfish launches ammo for *your* attack from his big guns.



These facelike openings lead to warp tunnels in the Palace of Gloom maze. Warp from door to door until you reach a cavern filled with underwater serpents.

The best way to get by these snakes is to dodge them when they move toward you.

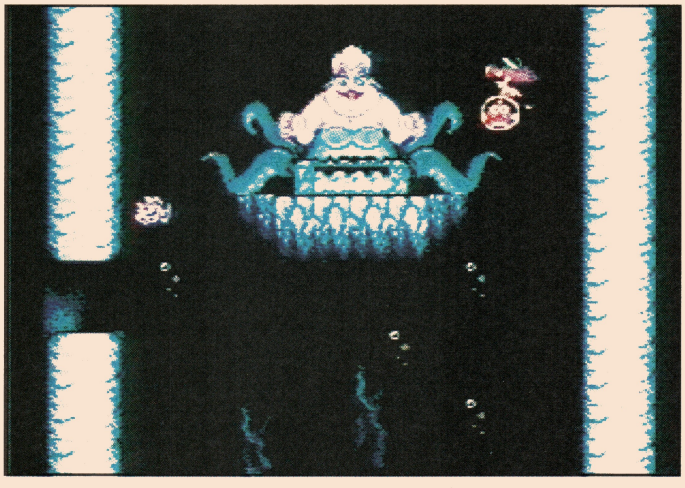


HINT

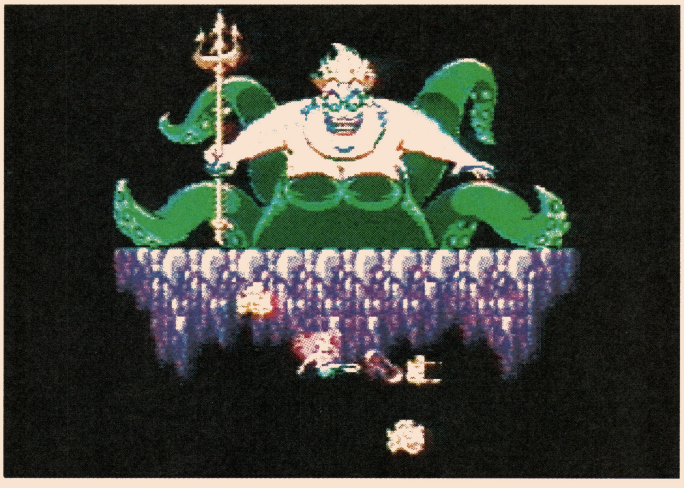
When you pick up a magic shell, hold on to it as long as possible. Aside from using the shells to open treasure chests, you can use them as battering rams against enemy fish. Carry the shell in front of you so enemy fish bump into it and fall harmlessly out of your way.

Capcom

3303 Scott Blvd.; Santa Clara, CA 95054



Ursula might look tough, but you can beat her the same way you destroyed the other bosses — when she drops fish, bubble-trap them, then throw them at her head.



When Ursula comes back (madder than ever), bubble-trap the fish at the bottom of the screen and throw them at Ursula's head. Soon, you'll have saved the ocean.

THE LONE RANGER

Gary Meredith

"A fiery horse with the speed of light, a cloud of dust, and a mighty 'Hi-Ho, Silver'" — millions of kids grew up watching the Lone Ranger, that champion of justice with the familiar theme song. His identity forever hidden behind a mask, former Texas Ranger John Reid (along with his faithful companion Tonto) rode the lawless plains of the Old West, righting wrongs and leaving folks wondering, "Who was that masked man?"

At least, that's the way it *used* to be. Somewhere in the midst of this NES translation, Konami lost the spirit of "The Lone Ranger." Don't get us wrong — this is a nice game to play if you don't know anything about the character. There are fine graphics, good sound, and lots of variety. But the premise of this game — killing the bad guys to collect money or other valuable items — is totally alien to the legend of the Lone Ranger. We only hope Clayton Moore never has to play the game.

In his numerous adventures on television — and before that, on radio and in books — the Lone Ranger never once killed anyone. Sure, he was great at shooting the gun out of a desperado's hand, but his marksmanship never inflicted more than a flesh wound. Tonto also taught his *kemosabe* to use his fists, and the Lone Ranger always brought his men back alive. You can fight barehanded in *The Lone Ranger*, but you're usually at too great a disadvantage to do so, especially in the higher levels.

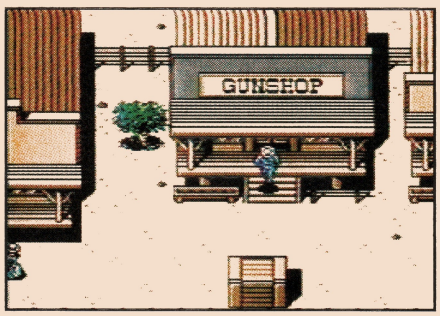
In this game, like the previous versions, the Lone Ranger lives in a world of black and white — black hats and white hats. Anyone wearing a

HINT

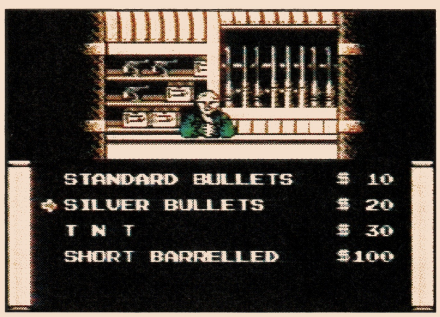
Buy plenty of ammo before you enter any of the shooting scenes. If you have enough bullets, you're able to use rapid fire, which significantly improves your chances of surviving the gun battles.

"Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear...." *The Lone Ranger* even keeps the familiar theme song, Rossini's *William Tell* overture.

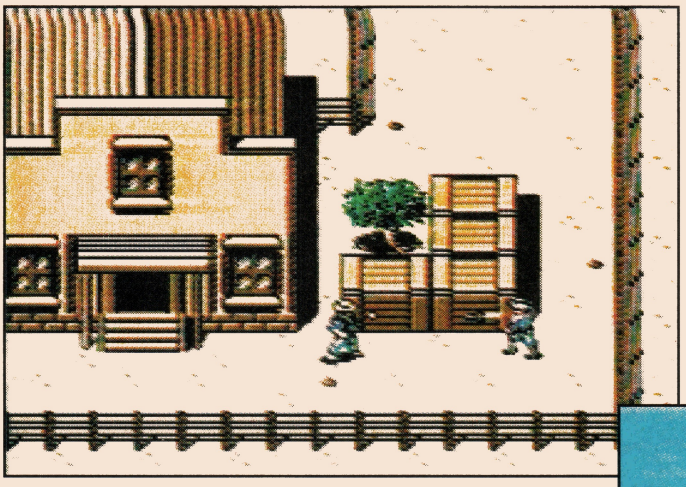
You'd better listen to Tonto, Ranger. Without the services of Silver, you don't stand a chance against the head of the Cavendish gang.



It's wise to note the location of the gun shop whenever you enter a new town. You never know when you might need to stock up on bullets.

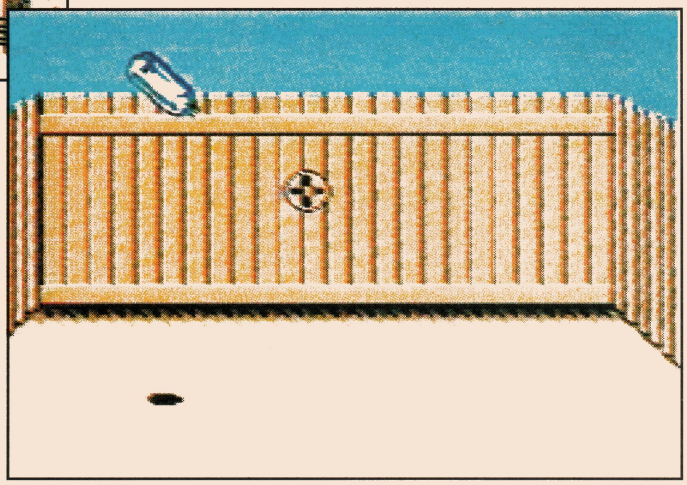


Silver bullets are much more effective than normal bullets, but they do cost considerably more. For now, just ignore the TNT.



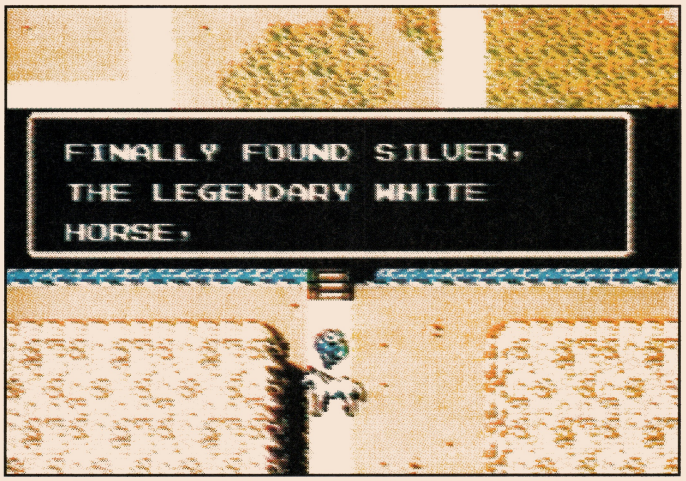
Here's a scene more typical of another Western TV show, "Gunsmoke." If you want to earn enough money for weapons, you must do some indiscriminate killing in this street shootout.

If you're a bit uncertain about your marksmanship, you can use these facilities to knock off a few glass jars. With a little practice, you'll be ready to take on the Wild West.

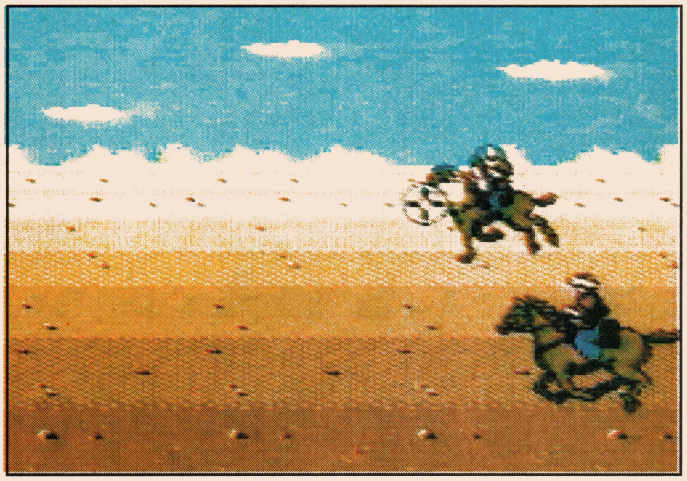


black hat is ready to shoot you in the back, while anyone in a white hat is fighting for truth and justice. There is a touch of gray in this game, however. Your initial dealings with the Narapmino Indian tribe are negative, but you can redeem yourself by helping them later on. Aside from this lapse, you live in the Wild West, where subtleties of character and motivation are lost in the dust.

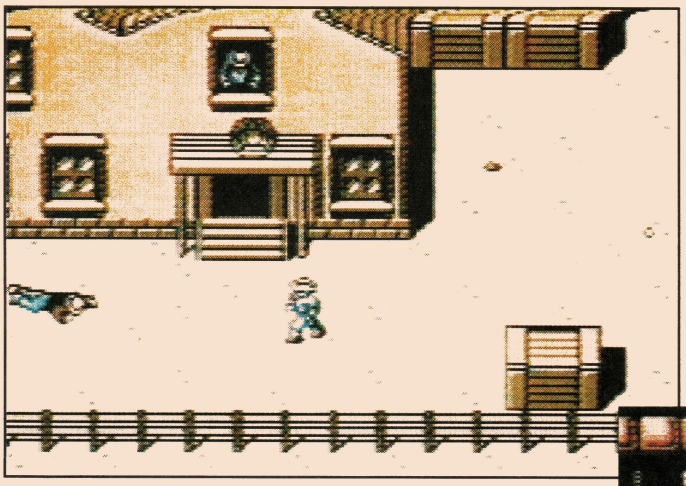
Your main goal in *The Lone Ranger* is to accumulate enough firepower to survive your final rendezvous with Butch Cavendish, the man responsible for the murder of your father and fellow



You've finally lassoed Silver, the steed of your dreams. He's a tough horse to train, but his speed and intelligence make it worth the effort.

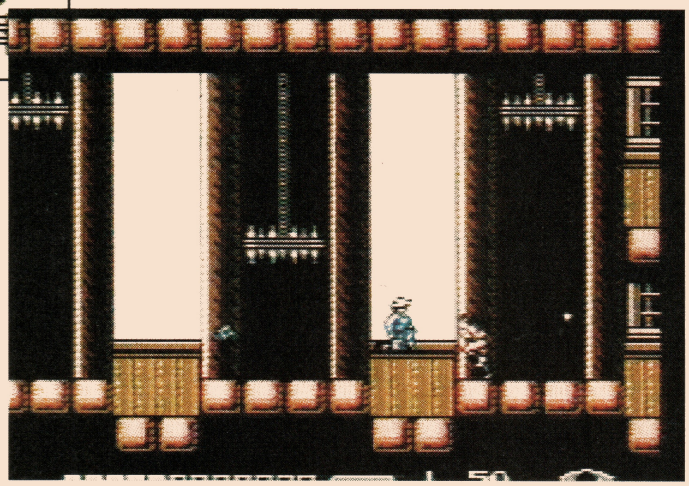


Your biggest shooting challenge is from the back of a horse at full gallop. Killing is tough, but just keep telling yourself that these guys asked for it.



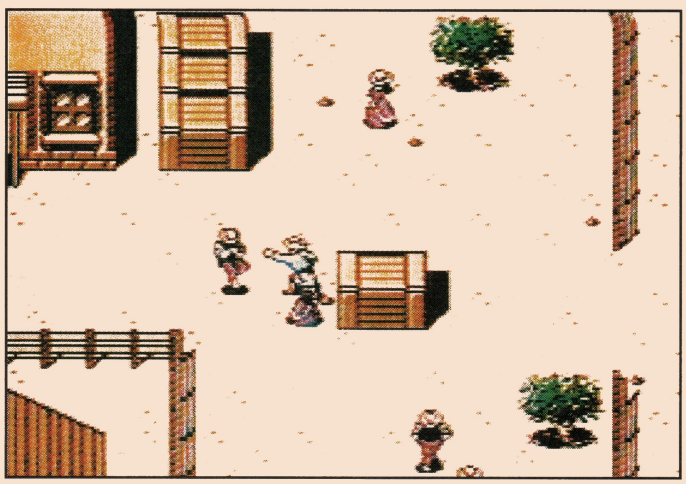
Obviously, these outlaws have no respect for the legend of the mysterious masked man. Don't let a barrel hit you, or it's certain death.

The Lone Ranger isn't about to take a drink in this saloon unless they're serving milk. But one of these chandeliers could give him a real hangover.

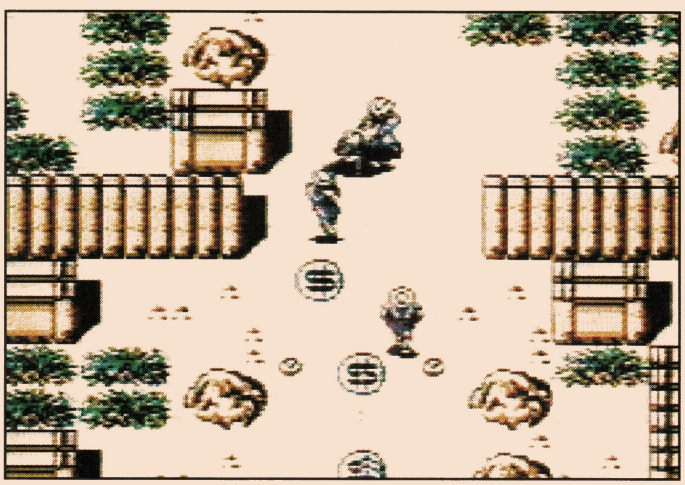


Texas Rangers. This unfortunately means plugging as many people as possible. *This* Lone Ranger isn't above mowing people down with a Gatling gun — or even using the less personal touch of heaving some TNT into a crowd. Still, if it means rescuing the U.S. president, a little cold-blooded slaughter might be expected.

Variety of game play certainly isn't a problem with *The Lone Ranger*. There's the standard role-playing adventure viewpoint, but there's also side-view adventuring, horizontal- and vertical-scrolling arcade scenes, and first-person "shooting gallery" gunplay. You



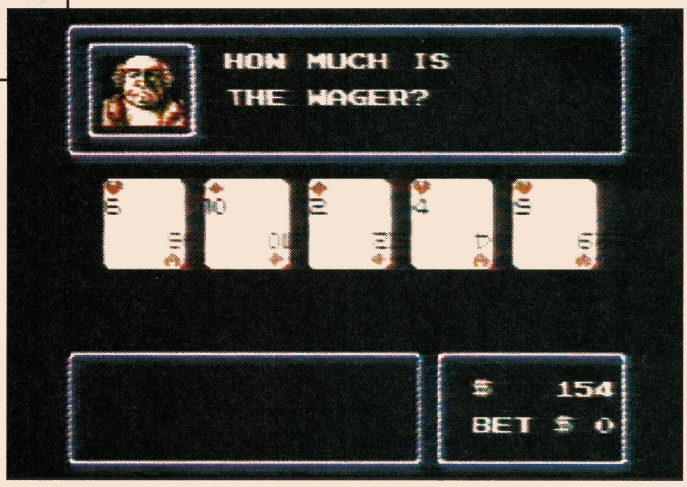
Sometimes you're able to revive the spirit of the Lone Ranger's code and engage in some good, clean fisticuffs.



On the other hand, there are some things you'd never see the *real* Lone Ranger do, such as cutting people down with a Gatling gun.

Since every corner of this mazelike building could hide some quick-drawing outlaw, it pays to be vigilant. Don't forget to pick up that extra ammo.

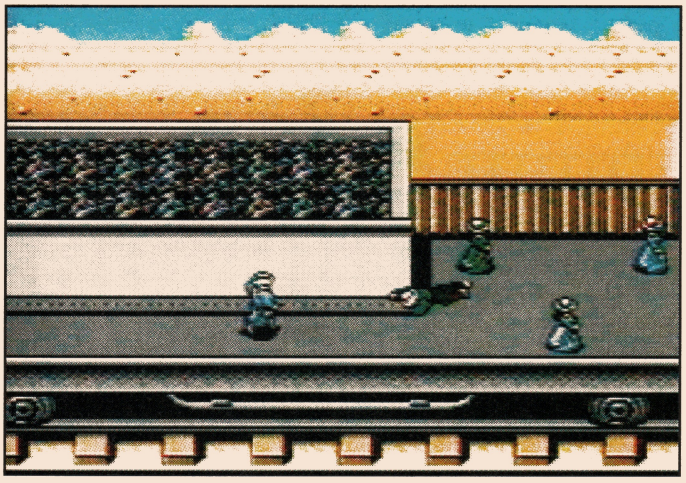
If you're going to break the rules, you might as well break all of them. With a hand this lousy, you'd better fold while you still have a few bucks left.



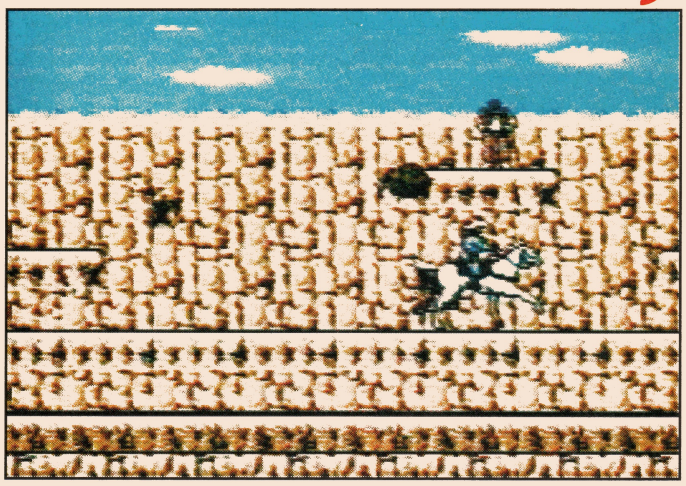
can also use a light gun for some of the shooting sequences. You may be irked at this adaptation of the old West's Robin Hood, but you won't be bored.

It's a shame that the designers of *The Lone Ranger* overlooked the chance to come up with a really different game, one that emphasized alternatives to killing and mayhem. With such an otherwise nicely executed game, Konami should have designed *The Lone Ranger* to reflect the spirit of the original series.

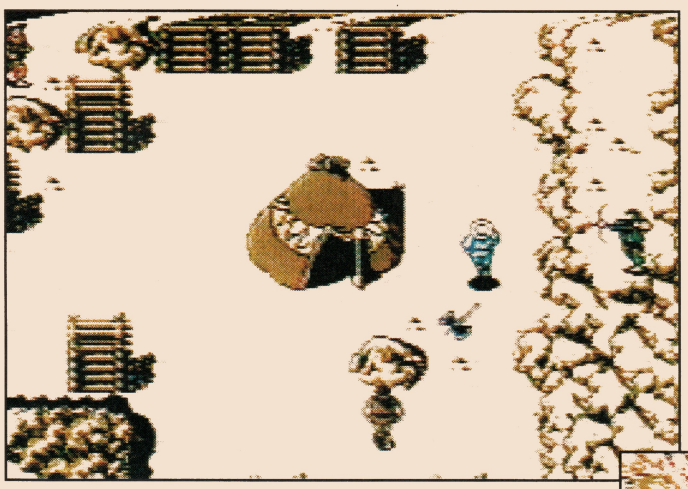
GP



Western women seem to be fairly blasé about gunplay, even aboard trains. You aren't very far from your confrontation with Cavendish now.



Take care when riding through this canyon. The guys dropping boulders on you are bad enough, but the Indians with the tomahawks are murder.



Your first meeting with the Narapmino Indians isn't going well, as you can see by the flying hardware. Keep trying different tepees until your efforts are rewarded.

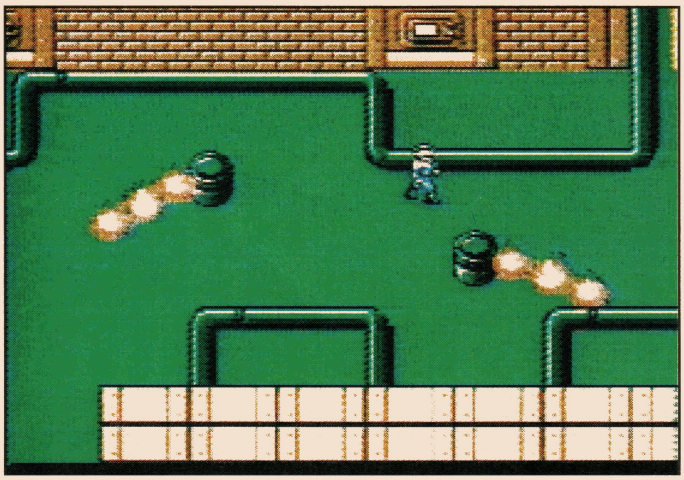
If you're able to go up into the hills and retrieve the rare rainbow egg from the bald eagle's nest, you receive eternal gratitude and friendship from the Narapmino chief.

HINT

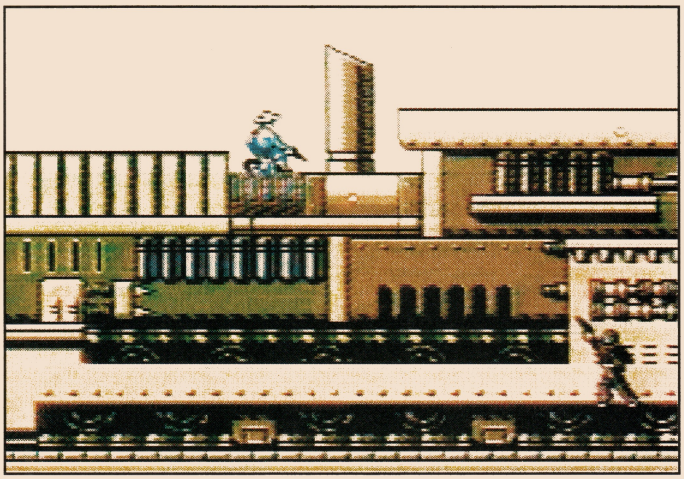
Once you're inside Butch Cavendish's hideout, you find a row of doors. Take the one on the far right, then destroy the northern wall of the room. This allows you quick access back into the hideout if you have to use the Continue option.

Konami

900 Deerfield Parkway; Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-4510



Just before your final battle with Cavendish, you must contend with these whirling blades of fire. Watch for patterns, then make your move.



Butch Cavendish isn't easy to beat, even if you do have a full arsenal of weapons. If you have plenty of TNT, it's best to get him in a corner and bomb him from above.

THE UNTOUCHABLES

Richard Lashley

He's got Chicago in his hip pocket. Policemen, politicians, heads of industry — most have their price, and Al Capone has the money to buy them. Chicago is *his* turf. Behind his fat cigar and big desk, he's the living legend of the 1920s' gangster world.

However, there's one man who won't sell out to Chicago's crime boss. Federal agent Eliot Ness wants Capone and his gang behind bars. And Ness is about to shake things up in Prohibition Chicago.

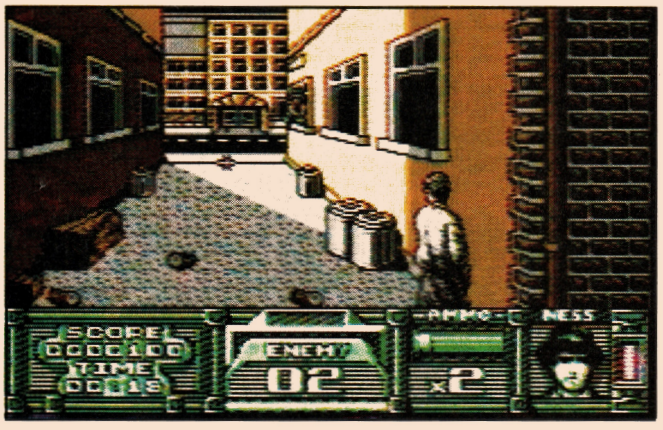
In *The Untouchables*, Ness, Oscar Wallace, George Stone, and Jim Malone have formed a dynamic crime-fighting team. It's up to you to help these elite agents bring Al Capone's crime empire to its knees. You can bet your Tommy gun that it won't be just another day in the office as you run and gun through seven levels of alleyways and warehouses, chasing down notorious criminals.

Just as in the 1987 movie of the same name, you need accuracy and a quick trigger finger to survive the street brawls. But *The Untouchables* is less a translation than a shooting-gallery game with a few characters and elements drawn from the movie. To put Capone in the slammer, you must shoot a given number of enemies or bottles within a certain time limit.

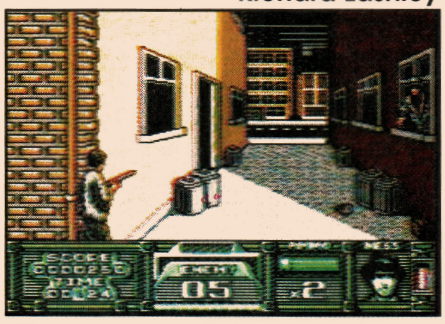
Although these stages won't excite you with flashy character maneuvers, they'll get your pulse racing as you compete against the clock to blast through contraband or Capone's thugs. Aim the cross hairs of your gun at the target with your controller, then pull the trigger with either the A or B button. You'd think that this type of shooter would allow you to use the Zapper light gun, but that's not an option.

HINT

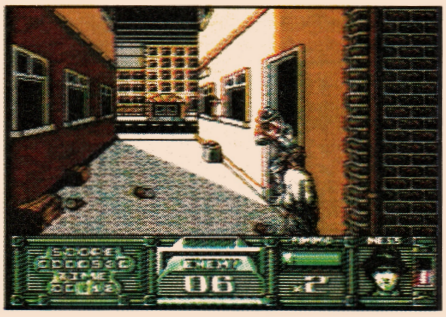
In stage 4-8, you're ambushed in an alleyway by a lone gunman who jumps out from behind a wall, squeezes off a few rounds, then quickly ducks behind the wall. Don't switch characters here. Instead, stand in the alley and be prepared to fire.



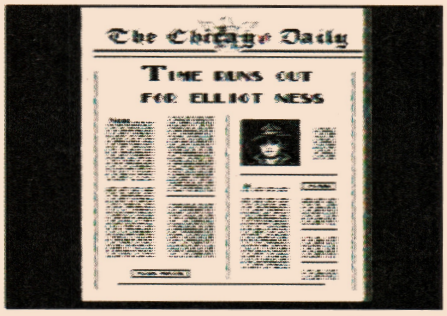
There's an ambush in stage 1. These alleyway windows provide perfect firing positions for Capone's thugs, so aim your shotgun in the middle of the alley, then wait for one of the snipers to poke his head out.



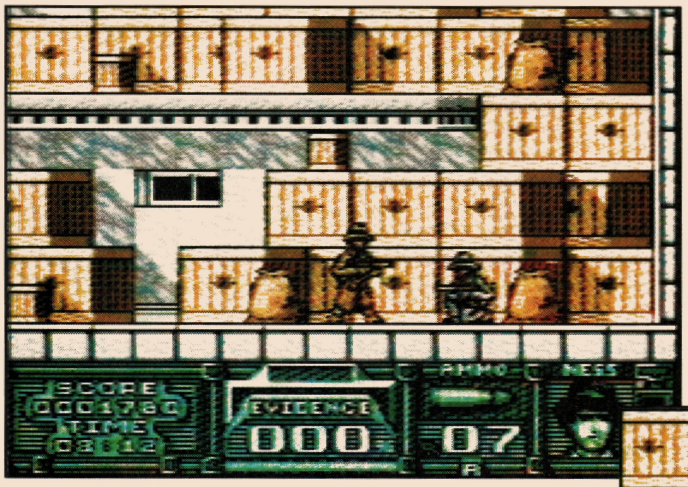
When you duck behind a wall, your shotgun automatically reloads with two shells. Remember, there's a time limit in which to shoot the thugs in each stage — so don't hide too long.



There are even more hitmen gunning for you in stage 1-3. The crooks in doorways take a large bite out of your energy if they hit you with one of their close-range shots.

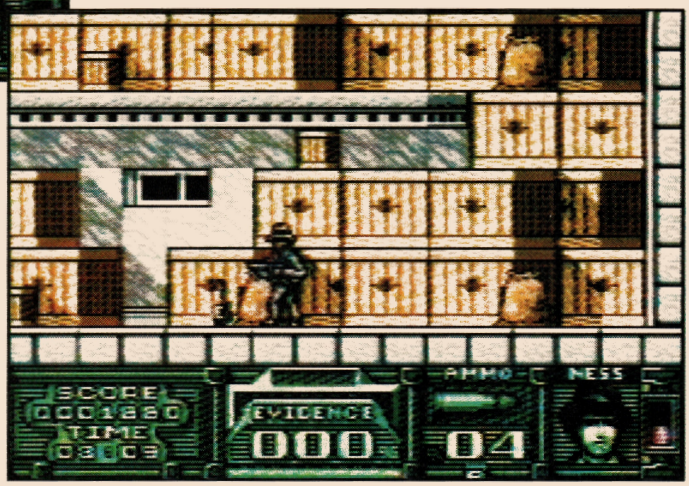


In a big town like Chicago, suffering a defeat at the hands of Capone is *very* embarrassing. Every newspaper in the city splashes your face across the front page.



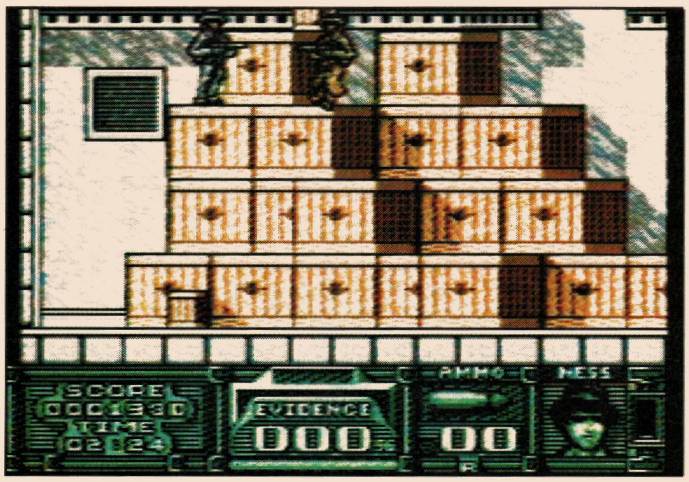
In stage 2, there are two-legged as well as four-legged rats inside the warehouse. You're surrounded by hitmen as you chase Capone's accountants. Kneel down to dodge these bullets.

You can't switch from Ness to his counterparts in this stage. Now more than ever it's important to grab the violin cases full of energy left behind by destroyed enemies.

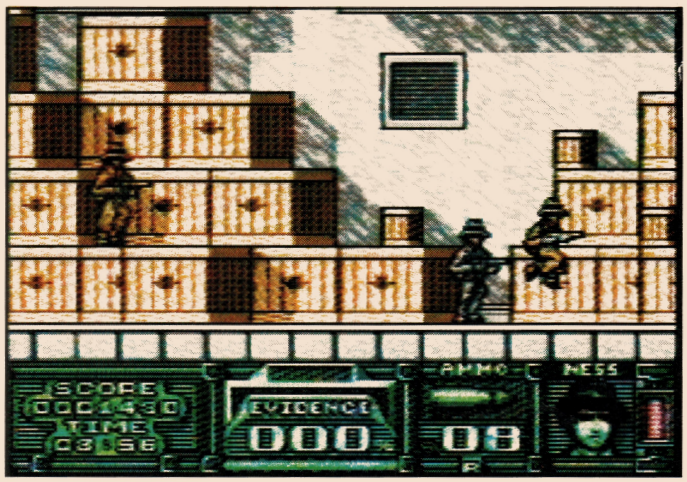


And you can't go through *The Untouchables* with both barrels blazing. For example, a series of alleyway gunfights makes up stages 1 and 4. Since your shotgun can hold only two rounds, you must duck behind a wall to reload — a potentially deadly move if you don't practice. To beat the clock in each stage, you must fire rapid, accurate shots.

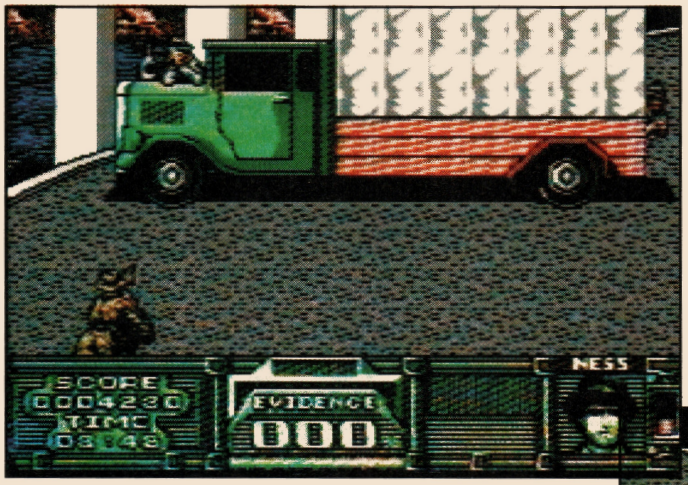
Since you're not immune to the streams of flying lead, it's important to keep your team healthy. Each character's energy recharges when he's not in use, so switch between



You have only ten bullets when you enter this warehouse. If you need ammo, look in the upper corners of the warehouse. Often, there's a violin case of ammo hidden there.

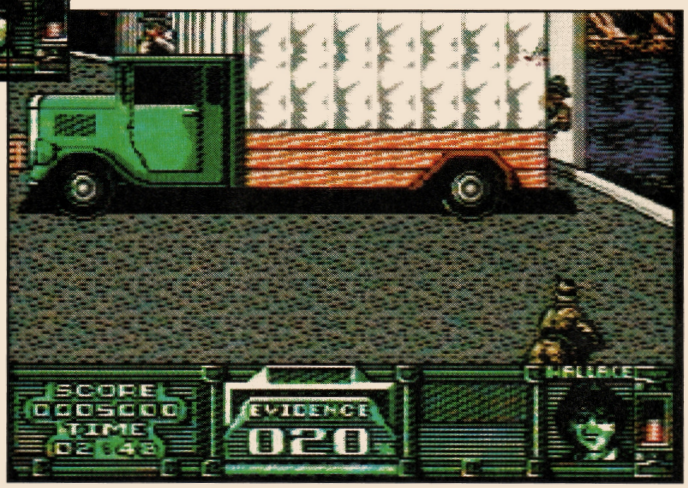


Chase down the gray-hatted accountants to gather the evidence they're carrying. Remember, you're not just battling criminals, but the clock as well.



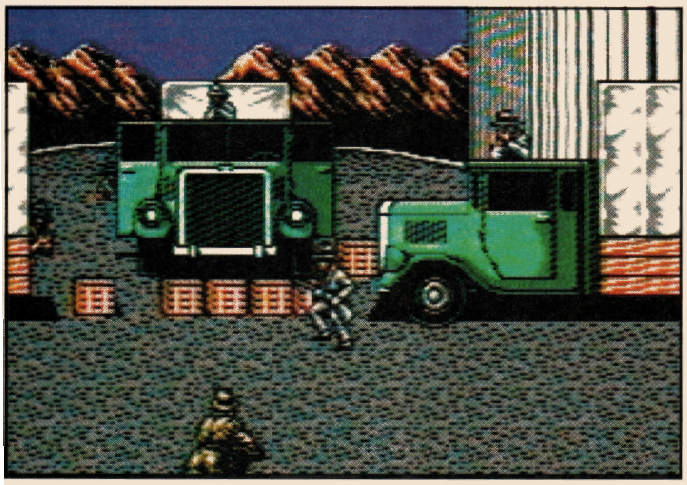
In the border raid during stage 3, roll on the ground and shoot bottles wherever they appear. It's important to switch between characters here because you can't take cover from the hail of bullets these goons are firing at you.

Bullets pound into the ground near your face, spraying you with blinding spurts of dirt. However, your aim must remain accurate. Watch the sparks your bullets make when they slam into the trucks to check your aim.

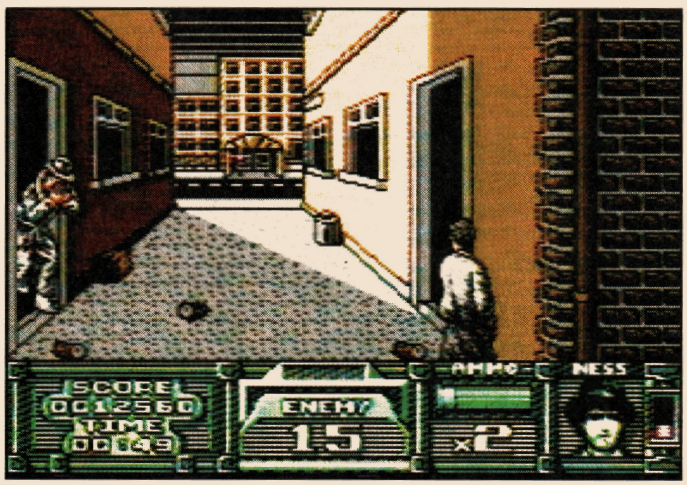


characters often. Actually, much of the strategy in *The Untouchables* is knowing when to switch heroes.

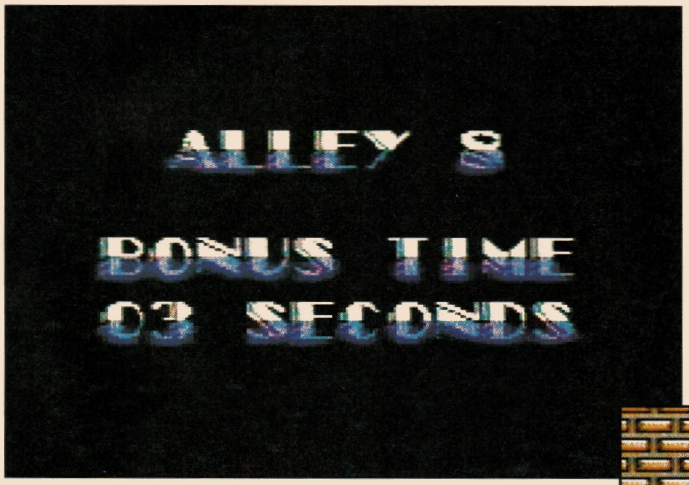
The game's shooting-gallery sequences are entertaining and smoothly animated. But other stages are less expertly executed. In the warehouse in stage 2, for example, Ness chases Capone's accountants, who are protected by professional hitmen. When you climb up the crates to the second floor, the graphics collapse for a split second — just long enough for you to lose track of where you are on-screen. This is not



After destroying the bottles, you can shoot this thug on top of the green truck to uncover a first-aid kit, which can fully restore a character's energy.

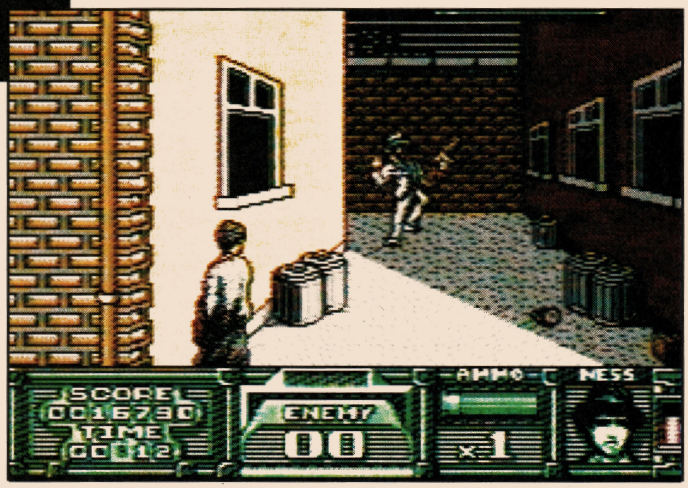


The Chicago alleyways in stage 4 provide a difficult test for your aim *and* strategic use of the characters. The difficulty increases as you approach a surprise in level 8.



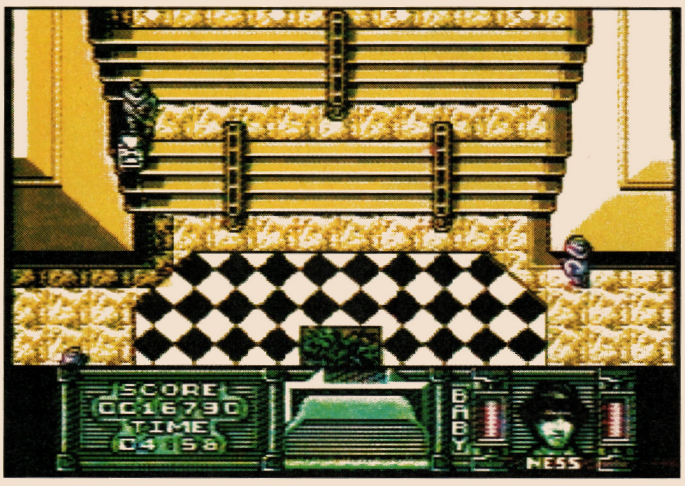
To accumulate bonus time in this stage, it's necessary to finish each previous stage with time left on the clock. When you reach the last stage, every second of that bonus time counts.

You have only one gangster to gun down in level 8, but he's *tough*. Unless you're a crack shot, you need a lot of bonus time to stretch the time limit. Gauge the accuracy of your shots by the thug's damage meter in the upper right.

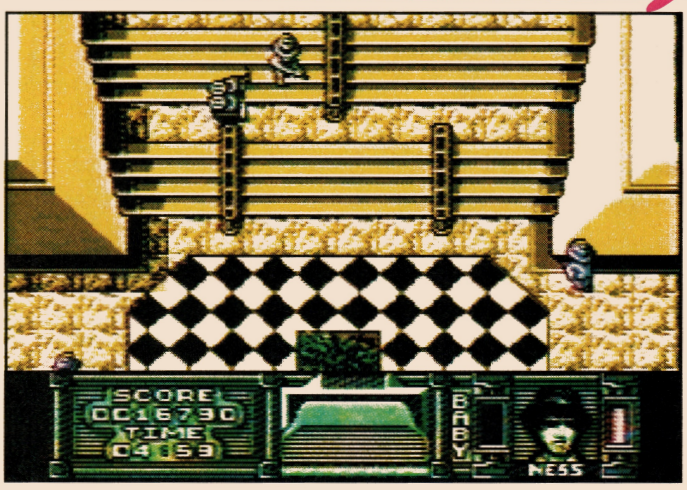


only confusing, but it can also prove deadly. When the graphics snap back, you might be staring down a hitman's gun barrel. And when you're chasing one of America's most wanted, you can't afford surprises.

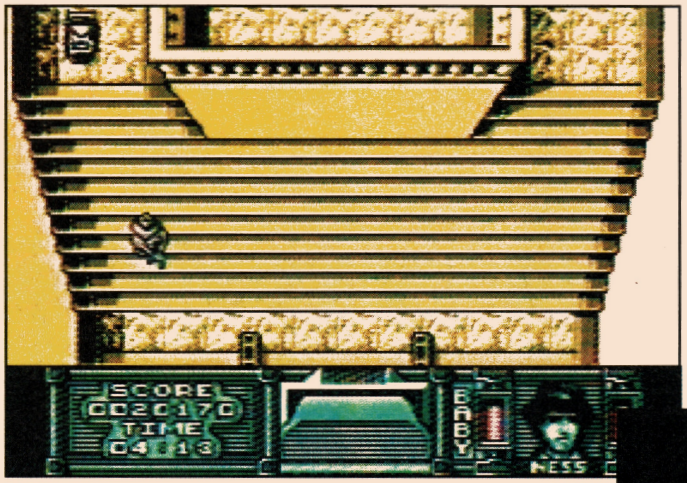
The Untouchables doesn't set any new standards for shoot-em-ups, but it does what arcade games should do — entertain. If you're a fan of the movie and want more action than strategy in your NES games, then you'll enjoy giving Capone a run for his money.



As the baby carriage starts its bumpy ride, stay in front of it and blast a path through the goons. The simplest route in stage 5 starts on the left side of the rail nearest you.



If you allow the carriage to ram into anything, the baby loses all its energy — and you're responsible for its death.



Getting down the mammoth staircase in the middle of the train station in one piece can be tricky. Stay in front of the carriage and keep shooting.

Congratulations! You're the hero of the day. Of course, tomorrow *is* another day.

HINT

There is a lot of territory to cover on the bridge in stage 3 — and you don't have much time. You can move more quickly if you don't shoot until you see a bottle. If you try to move and fire at the same time, you lose speed and waste valuable seconds.

Ocean

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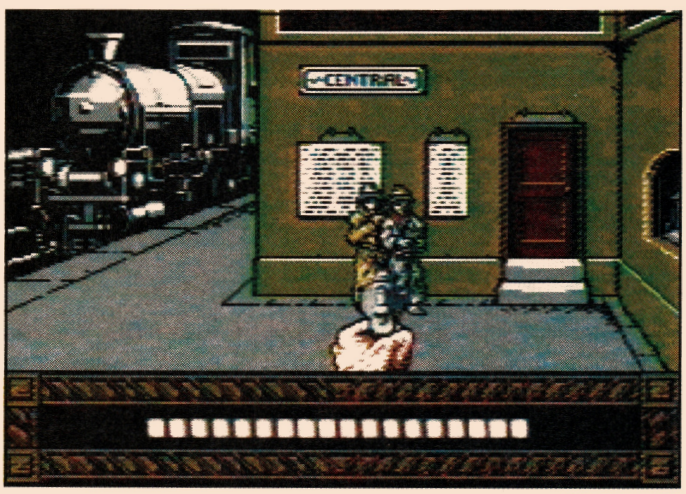
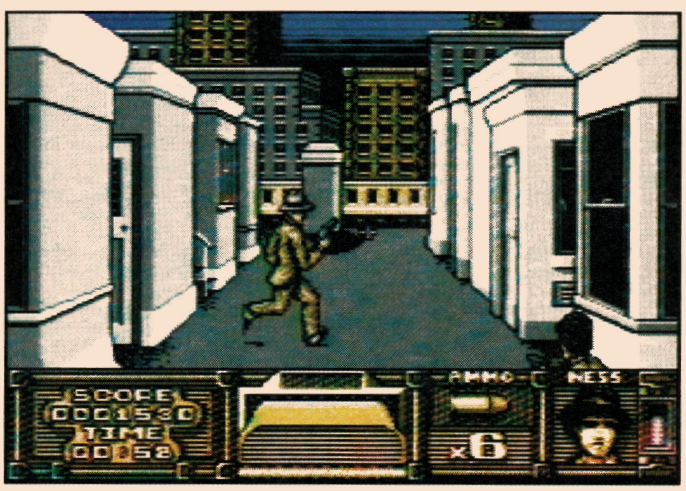


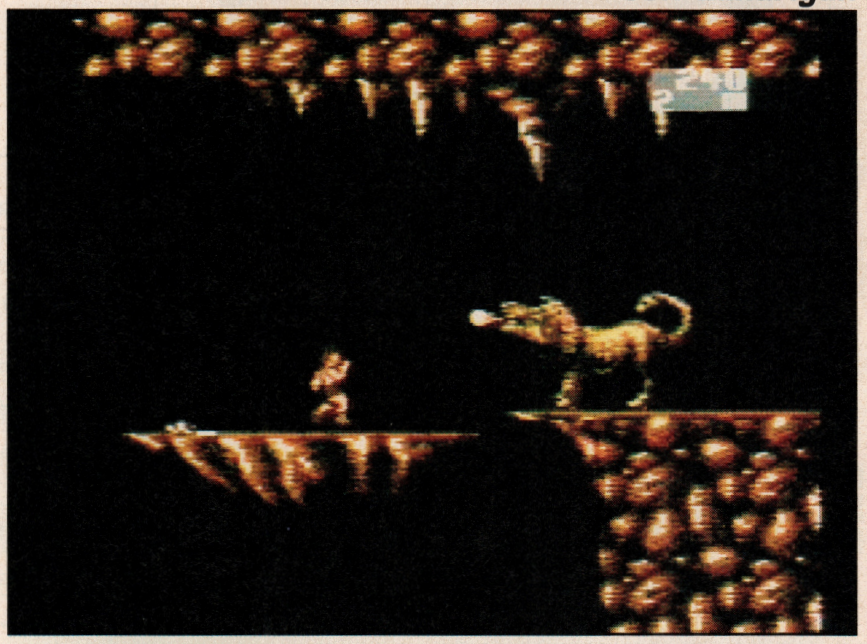
Stage 6 is a one-shot deal. George Stone is the best marksman in the group, and only he can shoot the hat off the gangster and free this hostage.



Though you can finally haul Capone into court, Frank Nitty is still at large. But when you hear footsteps on the roof, you know where this last hood waits for a showdown.

Conan

Jeff Lundrigan



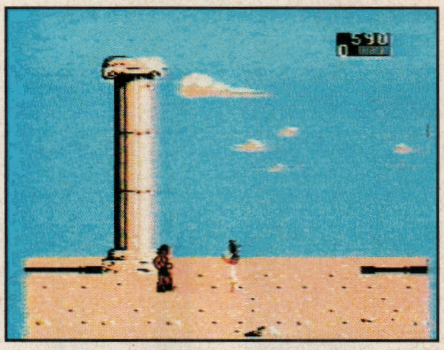
You use the demon's trident to kill the lion at the end of stage 1. That weapon is your only chance to get by him — he's invulnerable to fire and steel.

Conan of Cimmeria sits before the fire, listening to Nemonios, a sorcerer whose diminished sight did not diminish his power. Conan listens again to the Legend of the Four Urns. Eons ago, these burial urns of the first four kings of Aquilonia disappeared. The man who returns them to the Crypt of Cahalla will become the new king of Aquilonia. Conan knows this is his destiny.

Your destiny, however, probably won't include playing this mediocre game. Don't expect an action-packed Conan like you got in the Arnold Schwarzenegger movies. *Conan* is low on action and high on puzzles. There's a special item on nearly every level that you must have to defeat that level's boss. Your biggest task isn't fighting foes — it's finding the items. If you read the Legend of the Four Urns in the instruction manual, you get a pretty good idea of what the special objects are for the different levels.

Most non-boss enemies won't present a problem. They can't inflict much damage, and even if you run low on life points, there's plenty of extra energy to be found by kicking the small flying demons. However, make sure you watch out for those demons when you're jumping from

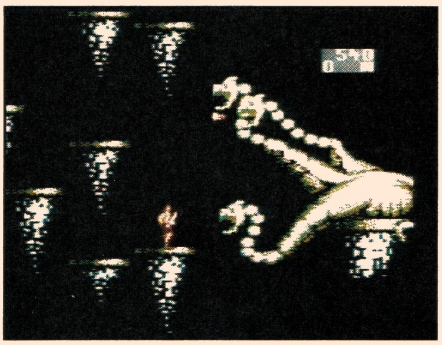
Use your sword to cut down this skeleton and release the trident-carrying demon. Then kill the demon with your fireballs.



The nymph isn't indestructible, but she's very hard to kill. However, if you kneel before her to show your respect, she lets you by scot-free.

The shield is trapped inside this statue. Use your sword to hit the statue just under its front foot, and it eventually crumbles.

Hold your shield up by pressing the A button, and you've blocked the Medusa's deadly eye-beams. But watch out for the flying demons that want to knock you into the pit below.



The three-headed dragon is a fierce opponent. There's no special secret to defeating him — just hit his heads until he dies. If you strike a head with the trident you found in stage 1, the noggin is destroyed with a single blow.

platform to platform. If they hit you, you're knocked into the lava or bottomless pit below. Try to jump during that brief time after one flying enemy is killed or disappears and before the next one shows up. You won't make quick progress with this method, but at least you'll arrive alive.

Be prepared to juggle the controls before you get used to them. Pressing Down on the directional pad on your controller doesn't mean "duck"; it means "jump in the direction you're facing." To duck, you must hold the A button while you press Down. It will take some practice to get used to — unless you want to keep leaping over items you meant to pick up.

When you combine these weird control maneuvers with the lack of passwords or continues — not to mention the occasional headlong dives into lava — you get a pointlessly difficult game. And *Conan's* graphics don't make up for it, either. In fact, they add to the problem: Most of the characters are small and badly animated, so sometimes it's tough to tell what's happening. Despite a few nicely done backgrounds, *Conan* looks like a first-generation NES game. The game's action-puzzle structure is interesting — it's just not very playable.

GP

Mindscape
(a division of The Software Toolworks)
60 Leveroni Court; Novato, CA 94949

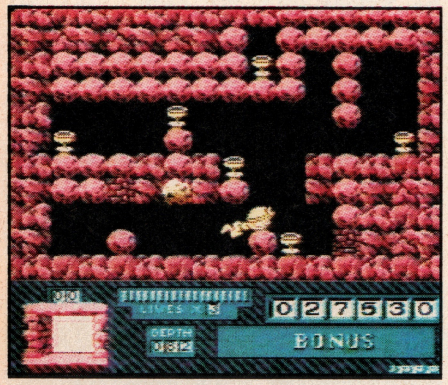
Digger T. Rock:

Lisa M. Bouchey

Pushing down the secret pillar opens the exit door for 60 seconds. Don't waste time — when you complete a cavern, you earn points for every second left on the clock.

Digger T. Rock is stuck between a rock and a hard place. For years the brave little miner has dreamed of discovering a city buried deep beneath Earth's surface, filled with lost treasures. Now he's finally uncovered a sign pointing to a lost city. It looks as if his dream will come true. But without your help, Digger T. won't be able to move enough dirt to reveal the lost city.

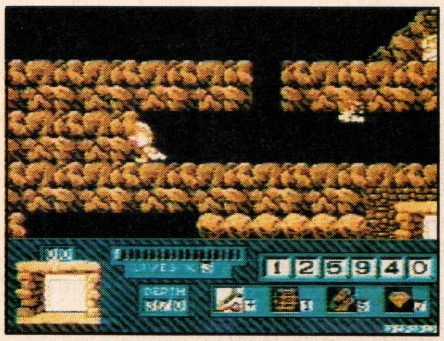
You'll leave no stone unturned as you tunnel through eight mysterious caverns in *Digger T. Rock: The Legend of the Lost City*. Packed into each cavern are perils and prizes — as well as a passage to the next cave, and a hidden pillar that opens the exit.



If you make it through the exit door of a cavern within the time limit, you enter a bonus room. You earn an extra life if you collect eight treasure cups before time runs out. But don't get trapped by falling boulders!

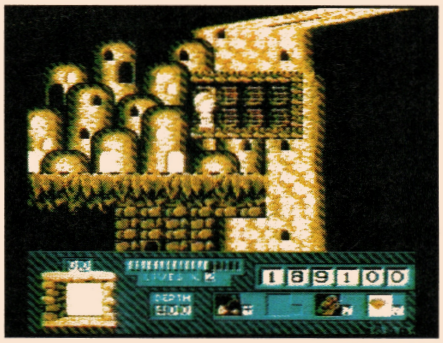
In each of the caverns, you must locate and activate that secret pillar. Once you've pushed the pillar, the exit door opens and you have 60 seconds to leave the cave. If you run out of time, you must make your way back to the pillar, push it down again, and try another dash to the exit.

As you burrow into the dirt, keep an eye out for enemies and emergency supplies. Your shovel makes a handy weapon for dinosaurs, ghosts, and cranky cavemen who stray too close. Or you can collect a few rocks to throw at enemies from a safe distance. Dig



Most caverns hide secret passages that can transport you from one part of the cave to another. Each time you use a secret passage, you score extra points.

The Legend of the Lost City



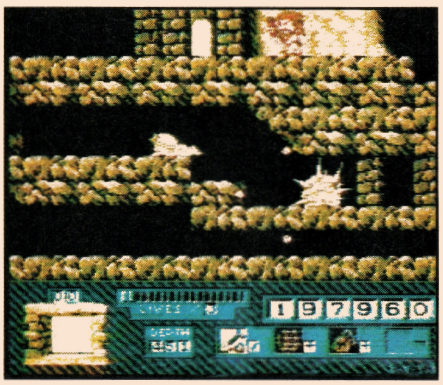
You can use only one jewel at a time in a trading station, but you're free to leave and reenter the store to keep trading as long as your supply of gems holds out.

into the walls of rock above you to uncover rocks suitable for missiles.

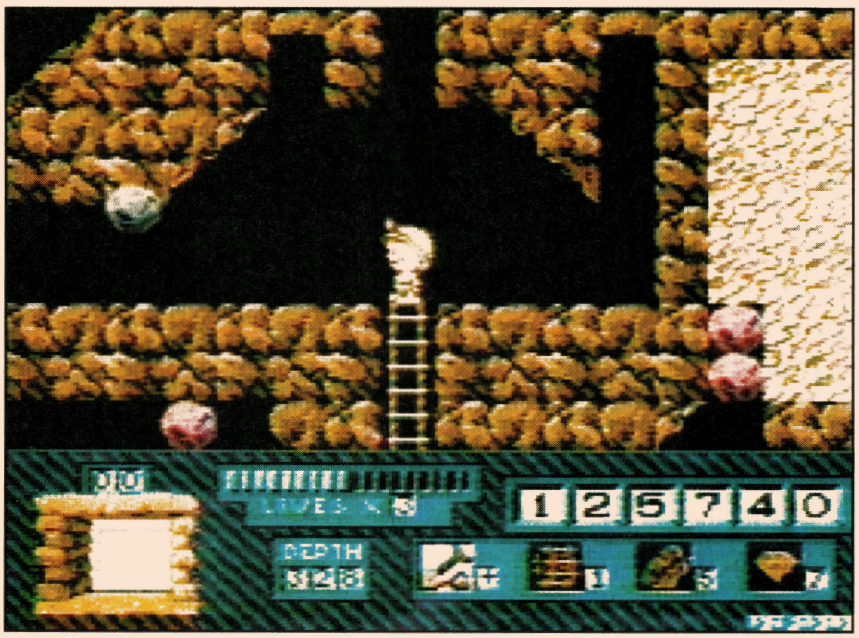
Your backpack holds only a meager supply of rope ladders, dynamite, and jewels, so search the caverns to pick up extras. You need the rope ladders to make climbing from drop-off points a little safer, and you must blast some enemies and obstacles off-screen with dynamite.

The jewels are your bartering tool. Some caverns contain towns and trading stations where you can trade jewels for extra supplies. Enter these towns by scaling the walls and climbing through open windows. There's a good rate of exchange — one jewel buys eight rope ladders, eight sticks of dynamite, or 26 rocks in the trading stations.

You can't buy power-up mushrooms, but you can unearth them as you dig for rocks. When a mushroom falls at your feet, kick it to release its power, then chase it and grab it. Digger T. turns pink, flexes his muscles, and becomes invincible for a few seconds when the mushroom does its stuff. Use this advantage to kick columns, boulders, and enemies out of your way. If you make it safely through the door of the deepest cavern, Digger T. will see a dream come true.



When you're using dynamite, kick it away or move a safe distance from it before it blows up. Get caught in an explosion and you lose your life energy — and a life.



Learn the layout of each cavern so you know where you can jump safely and where you need ladders. Sometimes you don't need a ladder to get down, but you might need one to climb up.

Colorful characters and a lack of violence make *Digger T. Rock* a good game for younger players, but complicated mazes and tricky game play take some practice to master. Don't be surprised if you get frustrated the first few times you take shovel in hand. Dig deeper — *Digger T.* is worth the effort.

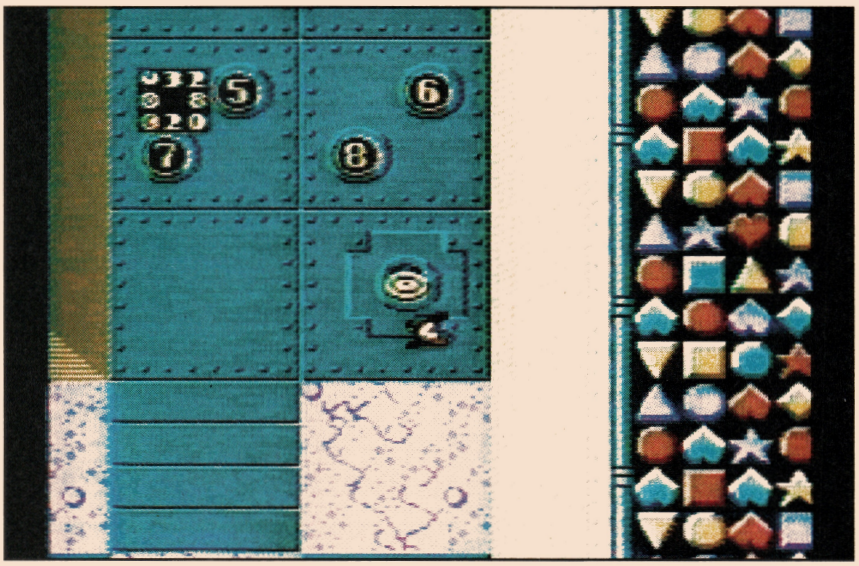
GP

Milton Bradley
443 Shaker Road; East Longmeadow, MA 01028

hot hits

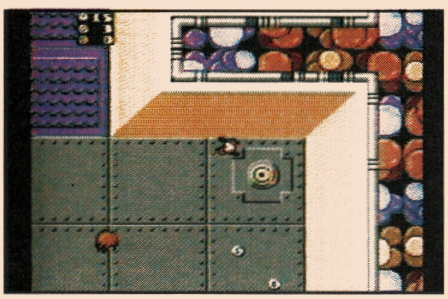
Fun House

Leslie Mizell



Although the regular targets can be hit haphazardly, the numbered targets must be hit in order.

Many people are familiar with the popular TV game show for kids called "Fun House." The program mixes quizzes with bizarre relay races and offers an action-packed scavenger hunt through an obstacle-ridden fun house. Now, Hi Tech Expressions has released a Nintendo game with the same name. But the NES game isn't like the television program at all.



The red blobs move faster than the blue ones, but if you hit either blob, you bounce back across the screen and lose some progress.

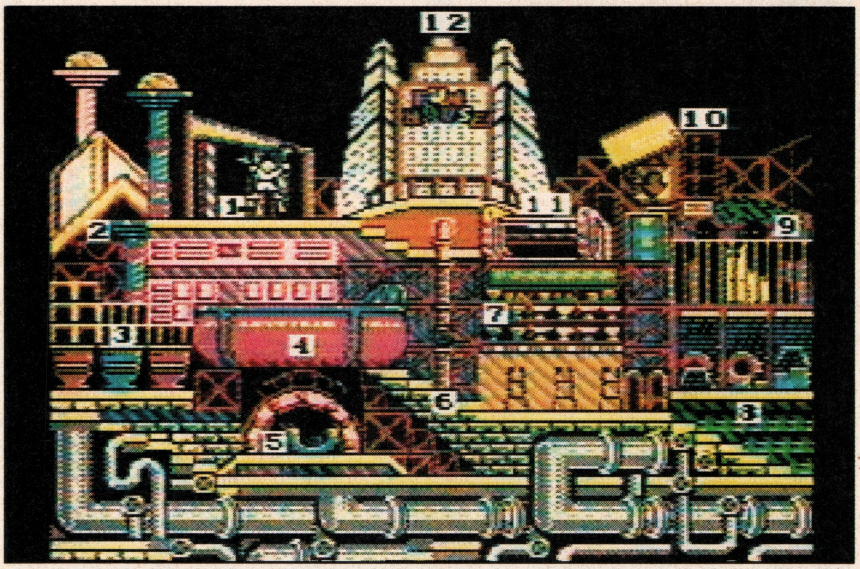
In the TV show, you're likely to get wet from water slides, messy from whipped-cream bombs, yellow from streams of mustard, and dizzy from trips through revolving tunnels. You don't get messy in the *Fun House* videogame — you just get bored.

You enter this *Fun House* solo (the game show features two teams of two). Grab your rollerblades and push off into the first of 72 rooms. The object? To throw tomatoes at a series of targets in each room. The gimmick? The floors of each room are slippery, making it tough to control your skater. And each room must be finished within a time limit, or else you lose one of your three chances to complete the game. There are no passwords.

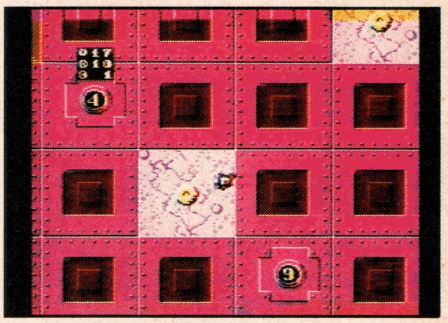
Any resemblance to J.D. Roth must be a coincidence—this game bears little similarity to the TV game show of the same name.

There are two types of targets in the game. Some rooms have normal, round targets. Other rooms have numbered targets, which must be hit in order before you can advance. Luckily, you have an unlimited supply of tomatoes.

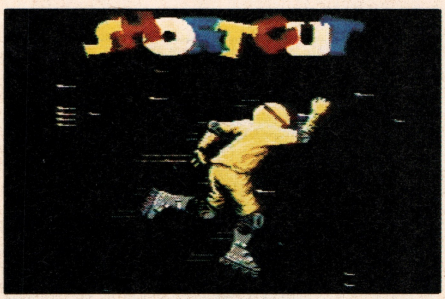
As you're skating through the large rooms, watch for power objects. Starbursts give you bonus points, and "glob clocks" add 8 or 15 extra seconds to your time limit. You can grab sneakers for a speed burst, or collect coins to earn extra lives. But the most important objects are the warp cubes. These cubes might be hidden, so lob a few extra tomatoes if you have the



Here's the only fun house you'll see. After you finish a level of rooms, you're automatically moved through the house.



That 30-second time limit isn't long when you must find and turn nine targets in order.



Find a warp cube — which may be hidden — and you zip to another room.

time. You'll be glad you did if you find a cube and can skip ahead to a higher level.

Naturally, your progress through the 72 rooms won't be easy. In addition to the slippery, tricky floor, there are several obstacles you'll encounter. You bounce off the blobs and must regain lost ground. Boingers make you spin out of control, although you can destroy them by hitting them with five tomato missiles. Banana launchers that shoot banana chips, and spray guns that shoot red balls, push you back and steal seconds from your time limit.

Why didn't the game designers follow the TV show when they were working on *Fun House*? After all, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and "Fun House" is an enjoyable, fast-paced show — a lot more suited to videogames than some of the other Hi Tech conversions. The rollergame action in this title certainly isn't the best arcade play we've seen, but it could probably support its own game and leave the mix of questions, relay races, and obstacle courses for a true *Fun House* videogame.

While Hi Tech has retained the name of the lively TV show, the format of this generally repetitive NES game isn't really like the television program. We can't really recommend this game and do believe that true fans should be warned not to expect the fast-paced action of TV's "Fun House."

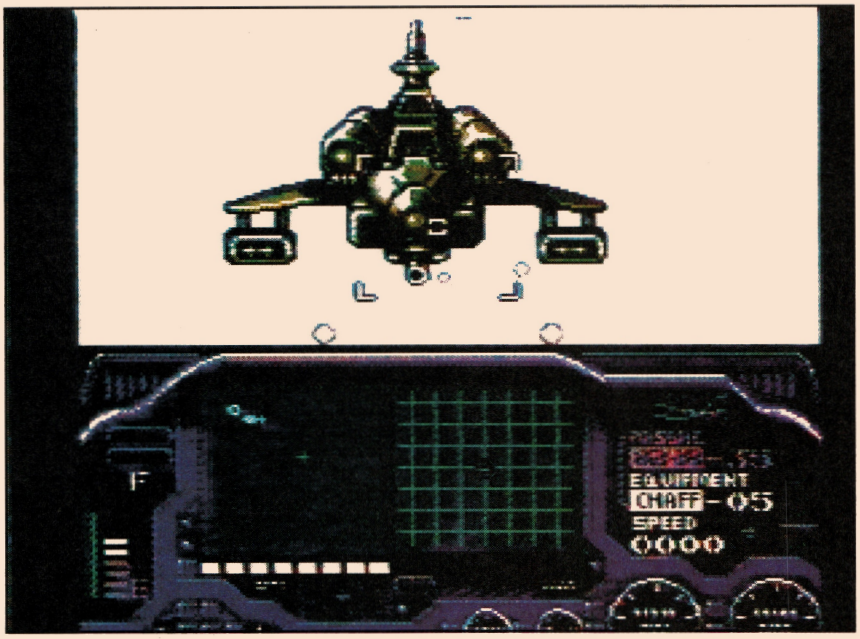
GP

Hi Tech Expressions
584 Broadway; New York, NY 10012

hot hits

Laser Invasion

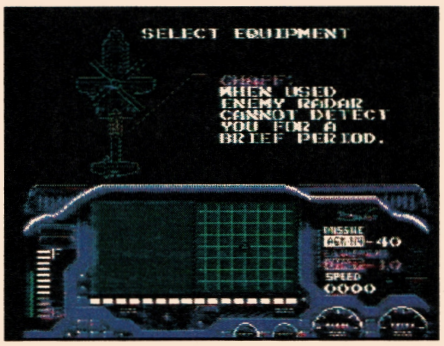
Stephen Poole



Sheik Toxic Moron's Mega Marauder is a huge 'copter, but it's not difficult to bring down. Activate your chaff, then concentrate your firepower on the Marauder's weapons systems.

The sheik had it all — incredible wealth, plentiful oil resources, and complete control of his country. But apparently that wasn't enough. Now he has his eye set on total global domination. Because he possesses the Technoscorch missile, which has a range greater than the Earth's circumference, no nation is safe from the sheik's murderous intentions.

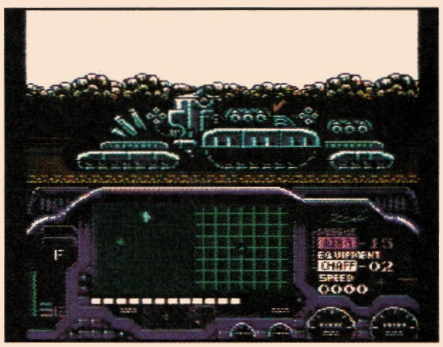
Laser Invasion gives you the task of stopping the sheik before he strikes. Your first step is to fly to one of his command outposts to rescue Spider, an operative who has information that's crucial to the success of your mission.



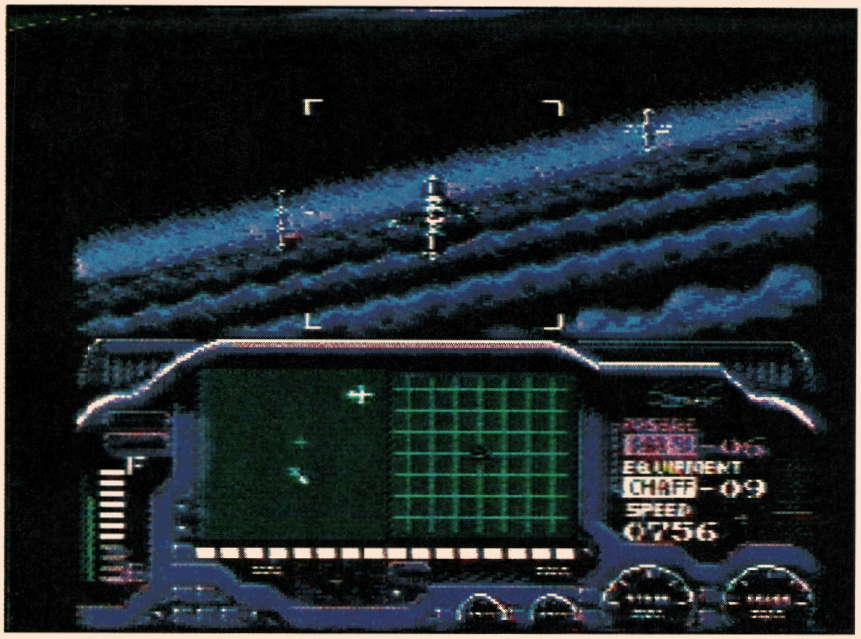
You can select the types of missiles and optional systems your Helijet carries. Chaff is one of the best special devices — it prevents enemy missiles from homing in on your chopper.

You're flying and fighting in the Laser Invasion Helijet, a highly advanced helicopter equipped with various bombs and gadgets. The 'copter can be flown with either a control pad or a joystick, both of which can be used to fire your cannon and missiles and activate the craft's special devices.

But there's another method to unleash your ship's firepower — Konami's Laserscope Optical Command Headset. The Laserscope, which looks like a heavy version of a telephone operator's headset, lets you aim and fire your missiles just by turning your head and speaking into a microphone.



This tank, called the Great Pyramids of Firepower, is the boss of the second stage. The same strategy that worked on the Mega Marauder should work here — if you're equipped with at least medium-strength missiles.



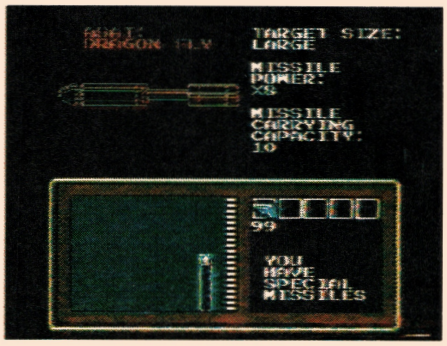
The Cloud of Doom aerial mines are some of the most difficult obstacles in the game.

One of the basic tactics in combat is to avoid enemy fire, and the Laserscope gives you a big advantage in that respect. If you're using a joystick or control pad, for example, you must point your 'copter directly at the enemy to target them — which means their guns are aimed right at *you*. With the Laserscope, the cross hairs are displayed on a clear eyepiece in front of your face, so you can target an enemy by moving your head (instead of your chopper) until the cross hairs are on the target.

You run into assorted jets, helicopters, and aerial mines on your way to rescue Spider. You can outfit your Helijet with one of three kinds of missiles — but the greater the explosive power of a missile, the fewer you can carry. Most enemy aircraft can be taken out by just one of the weakest missiles, but destroying stage bosses requires multiple hits from your cannon *and* your missiles.

After you locate the base where Spider is held captive, you must leave your helicopter and fight your way to the compound on foot. The ground combat segments resemble an earlier NES game, *Operation Wolf*, with enemies both on the ground and parachuting from above. The Laserscope works fine here, but the Zapper light gun works just as well — and it feels more natural.

The compound is actually a maze filled with enemy soldiers and dangerous rooms. A time bomb is activated when you locate Spider, giving you precious little time to find your way back to your chopper. If you succeed, you're given more assignments, with the ultimate goal of destroying the Technoscorch. If you fail, it's back to the drawing board to start this mission (or another) at the beginning.



Some compounds contain equipment that's vital to the completion of your mission.

Laser Invasion has a great deal of variety for a shoot-em-up, thanks to the different segments in each mission. On the other hand, there's not much depth to each segment. Once you get a taste of ground fighting, for example, you have a good idea of what ground combat looks like throughout the rest of the game. The later missions require you to fly through uncharted territory to reach the bosses, but you'll cover a *lot* of familiar ground beforehand.

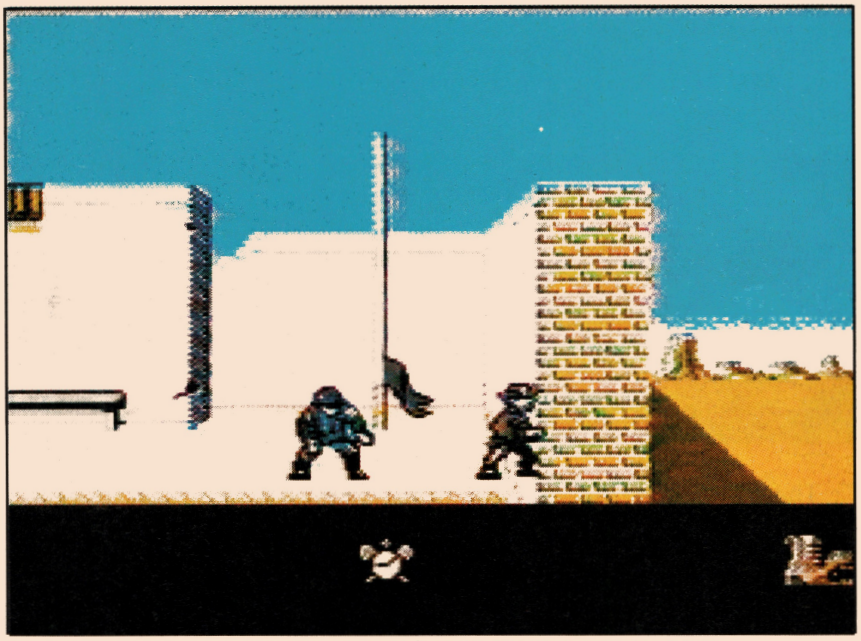
Laser Invasion was designed for the Laserscope, and the headset is a big help in some parts of the game. But don't feel as though you need a Laserscope to enjoy *Laser Invasion*. It's a solid, fast-paced game — with or without the Laserscope.

GP

Konami
900 Deerfield Parkway; Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-4510

North and South

William R. Trotter

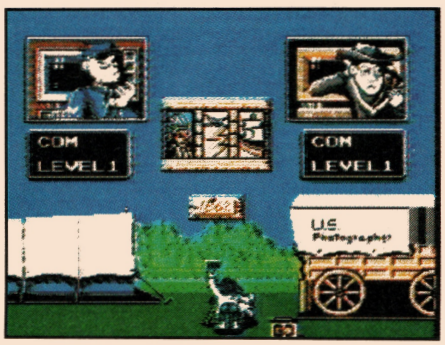


The object of the game is to occupy or conquer enemy territory, symbolized by a fort-taking sequence that might be called "capture the flag."

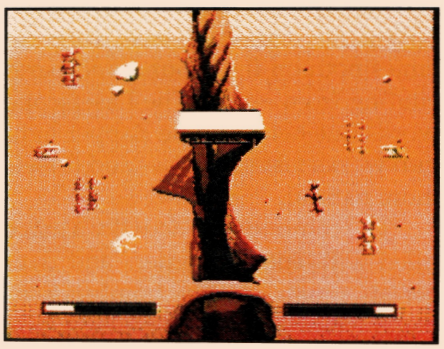
Don't believe the instruction manual when it says, "Every effort has been made to simulate the strategic circumstances actually faced by the Union and the Confederacy." *North and South* is a pleasant enough game, but if you're a history buff, *don't* expect a realistic simulation.

Indeed, *North and South* manages to reduce the entire U.S. Civil War to a Warner Brothers cartoon. You keep expecting to see Yosemite Sam, dressed in a Confederate colonel's uniform, brandishing a sword and shouting: "Chaaarge the varmints!"

But never mind. If you can accept this odd, ditzy game for what it is, and not bother about what it *isn't*, you may find it very entertaining. Certainly, there's not another "war game" like it on the market.



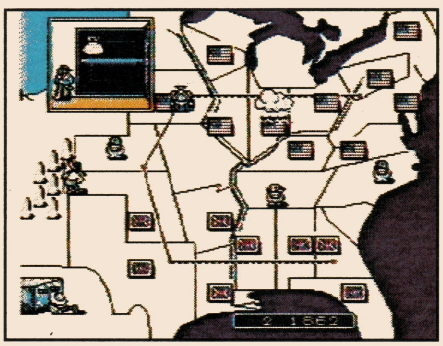
The opening screen gives you several options, including difficulty levels, random Indian raids, and storms that hamper troop movement.



Although the battles are cleverly designed, they move much too quickly for you truly to enjoy them.

Most of the action takes place on a colorful map of the Eastern United States that dates from around 1860 to 1864. Using cartoon-army icons, you shift forces from one state or territory into another, trying to isolate, occupy, or conquer enemy real estate. If two opposing armies meet in the same state, battle takes place.

Although the terrain varies little from battle to battle, these skirmishes



A safe full of money bags translates into a fresh army. If the South keeps its supply route to Europe open and its railroads running, the Confederacy can easily win the war.

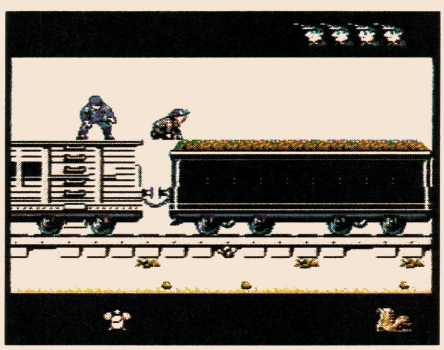
are lively affairs. Using a "ranging bar" that appears at the bottom of the screen, you can shell the enemy with your cannon (and see a neat crater appear when the shell goes off); or you can maneuver infantry and cavalry units for attack and defense.

Some tactical skill is called for in these scenes, but the default speed of the battles is much too fast to enable you to enjoy them to the fullest extent. You almost never have time to get off more than two or three cannon shots before the animated enemy troops are in your face. The result is an uncomfortable mixture of arcade action and non-arcade subject matter that is both fun and frustrating.

When you try to capture an enemy fort or train, prepare for pure arcade action. You must guide your animated soldier across a long scrolling sequence, battling the enemy with fists and knives. There are a lot of these sequences, and they're all virtually identical. Once you've mastered the basic moves, they become quite tedious.

There's a railroad running around both sides' territory, and whenever a train goes between two cities, it drops off a safe full of money bags that you can exchange for new armies. As long as the Confederate side controls their part of the railroad, it's perfectly possible for the South to win the war — so you must decide if you want to change history and portray the South, or give the Confederacy a thrashing and be the Union army.

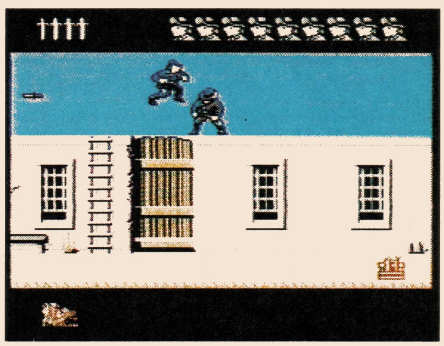
There are also some random events (if you choose that option) that add an element of chance to the games: storms, Indian raids, and — rather curiously — Mexican terrorists, who pop up from time to time to lob bombs at whomever is occupying Texas.



Capturing an enemy train usually lands a staggering blow to the loser.

The cartoony graphics are cute, and this NES version actually plays much better than the original computer game. While nothing about this goofy game makes a whole lot of sense, *North and South* is easy to learn and fun to play. Even experienced war gamers might enjoy a few games, but they'll have to loosen up and forget their history books first.

GP



When you storm an enemy fort, the action becomes pure arcade — and utterly predictable after the first two or three times.

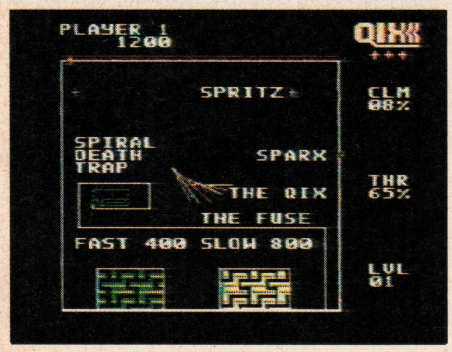
Kemco-Seika
20,000 Mariner Avenue; Suite 100; Torrence, CA 90503

QIX

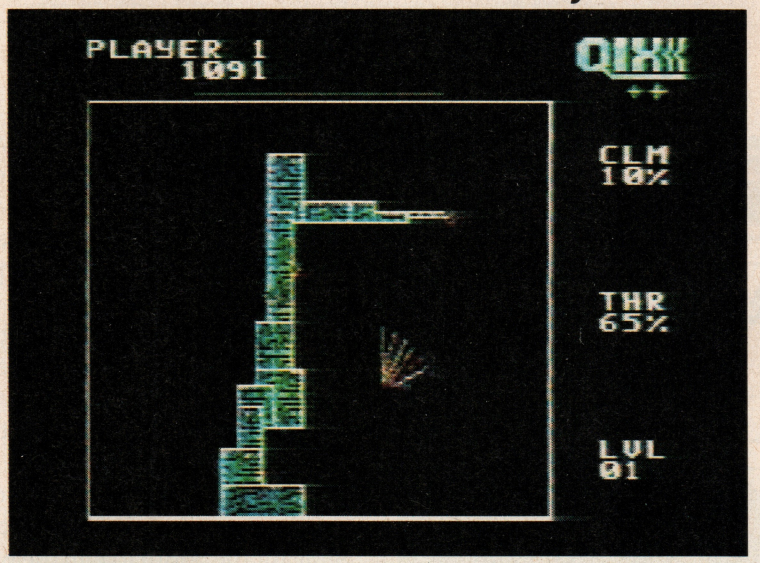
Gary Meredith

Computer viruses are no fun — at least, not until now. *QIX* isn't one of those time-consuming, information-destroying nuisances. The only damage *this* virus can do is to your ego.

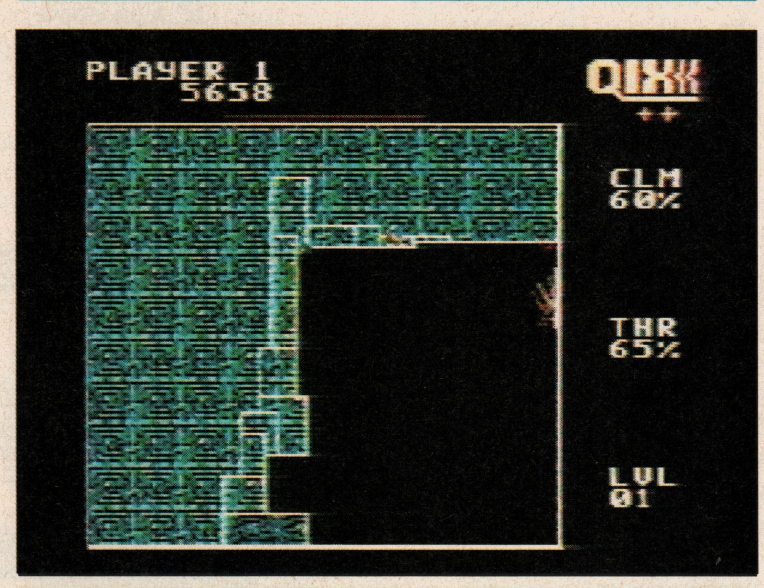
Almost identical to the popular arcade, computer, and Game Boy versions, *QIX* is an exciting test of nerves and skill. No sooner do you pop the cartridge into your NES than your system is invaded by the QIX virus — as well as the SPARX and SPRITZ viruses that are QIX by-products. It's up to you to "immunize" your system by claiming chunks of memory from attack.



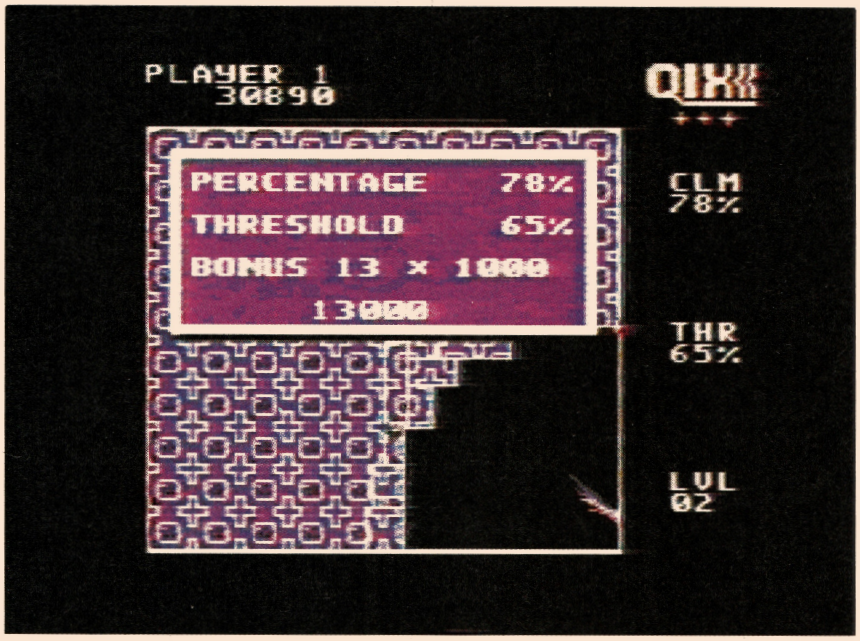
From this screen, the advantages of the slower speed are obvious. Scores are doubled — but so are the chances of being zapped.



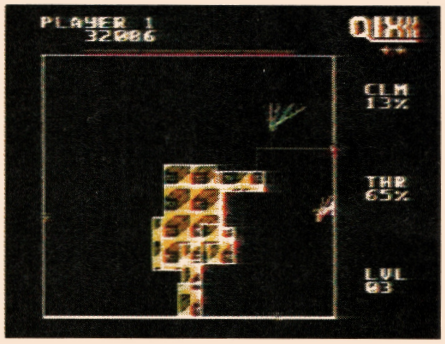
The conservative approach involves stacking a number of smaller boxes, avoiding any long stretches of open space where the QIX virus might nab you.



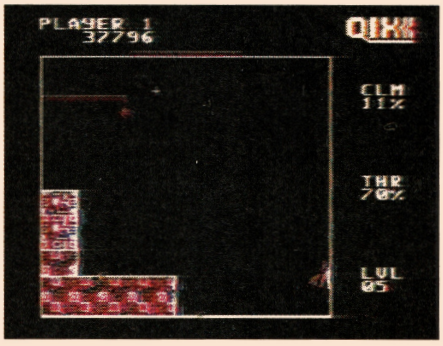
Closing off the section gives you almost enough captured memory to move on to the next memory address. Succeeding levels require you to claim more memory.



Once you're accustomed to the movements of the viruses, try to capture more memory than required. Each extra percentage point earns a 1,000-point bonus.



With a little planning and patience, you should be able to split two QIX viruses, resulting in even more bonus points.



The disadvantage of playing at slow speed is that you give the QIX virus extra time to produce SPRITZ and SPARX offshoots.

Use your STIX marker to block off chunks of the screen ("memory") until you've saved enough of each level to thwart further infection by the QIX virus. The first level requires you to save at least 65 percent of the memory (any percentage points beyond that threshold earn 1,000 bonus points), with each progressive level requiring a higher percentage of memory to be claimed.

Once you get past the first few screens, things get a lot tougher. More QIX viruses appear, and the SPARX and SPRITZ bugs multiply as well. These lesser viruses are no less deadly — and in some ways can be more dangerous. You often find yourself concentrating on the QIX viruses, while the subsidiary viruses are sneaking around, waiting to zap you when you least expect it. A new SPARX or SPRITZ is produced by each QIX every time the timer runs down, so you should always try to finish a screen as quickly as possible.

Of course, there's a downside to finishing quickly. You control the speed of the marker at the end of the STIX by pressing either the A button (fast) or B button (slow) on your controller. You finish quicker if you use the fast mode, but you earn more points with the slow mode. Ideally, you should use the slow mode most of the time and hold the fast mode in reserve in case you need a quick burst of acceleration.

QIX is definitely a game that rewards not only hand-eye coordination, but also the ability to juggle simultaneous actions. So if you've long since mastered the skill of patting your head while rubbing your stomach, you might want to give virus-bashing a try and play *QIX*.

GP

Taito
390 Holbrook Drive; Wheeling, IL 60090

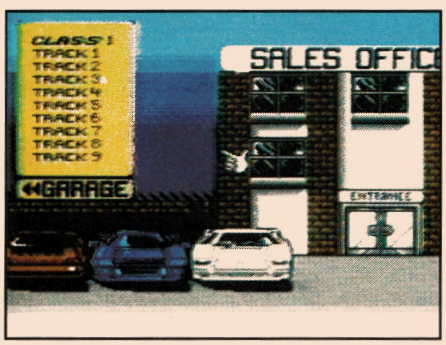
Super Cars

Richard Lashley

Prices at the car lot aren't negotiable in *Super Cars*. You either have the money to buy a faster car, or you don't.

Somewhere out there lurk secret hotshots who long to get behind the wheel of a powerful car and zoom around the track at high speeds. But few of us can attract rich sponsors or truly wish to risk life and limb in a car traveling over 200 mph. A driving simulator such as Electro Brain's *Super Cars* is a safe substitute. Here, you can strap yourself into a high-performance car and race off into your imagination.

In *Super Cars*, an overhead view follows you into your first season in the fast lane. But before you start marking laps on one of the nine tracks, visit the garage and invest in items such as turbo chargers, super brakes — even missiles, for those particularly persistent competitors.

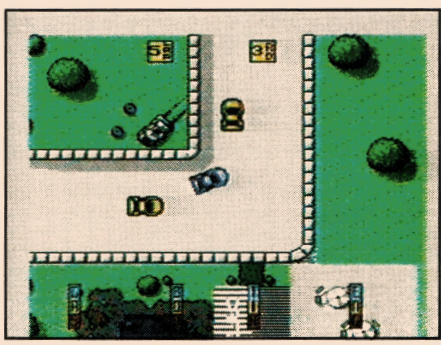


You launch your racing career here. When you're not entering races, you should visit the car dealership and the garage.

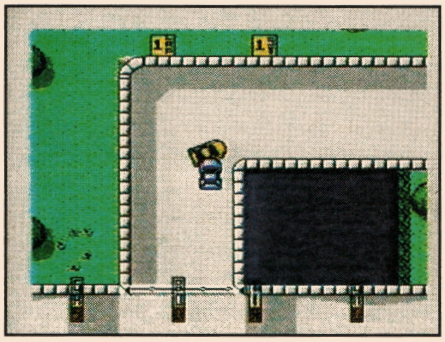
Once your car is customized, select a track. The same scenery zips by no matter what track you choose, but the obstacles and configurations of the tracks differ greatly. Track 1, for example, is a breeze, with easy curves and no obstacles. But as you skip to the advanced tracks, you'll face a few surprises — oil slicks, ice patches, and complex twists are common.

Since only the top three drivers win money, just crossing the finish line isn't enough. Your car takes a beating in every race, and a lot of cash is required to maintain your racer. If you can't afford regular visits to the garage, your car might explode during a race.

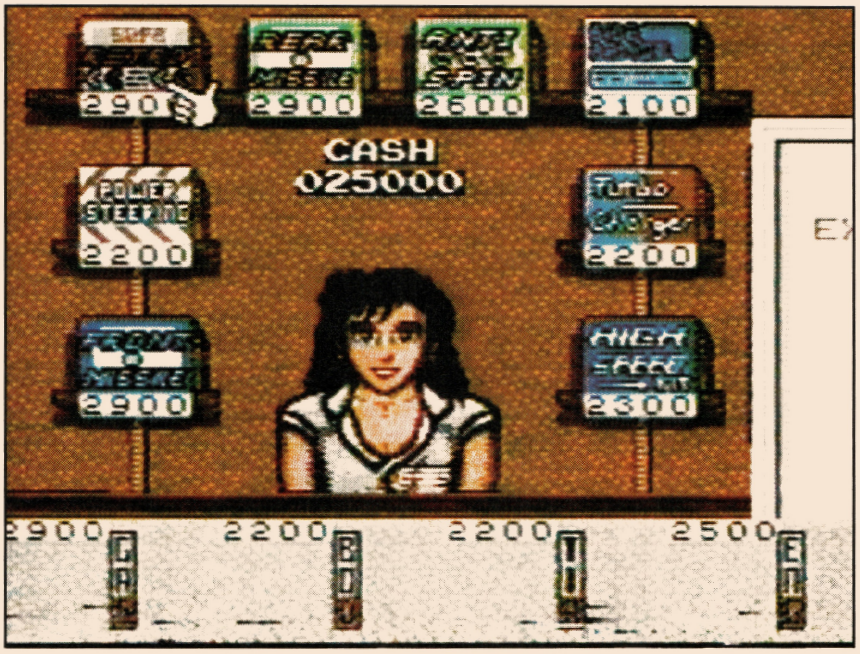
It's also a good idea to have power steering installed when you can afford it. Since the directional pad of your controller serves as a somewhat awkward steering wheel, power steering really helps you to hold any



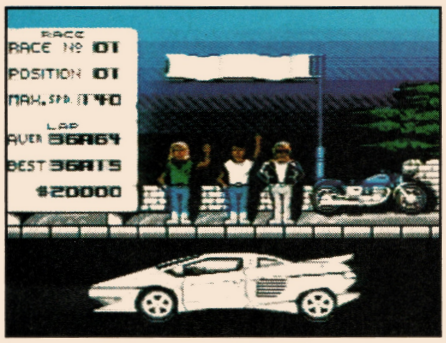
There are many twists and turns ahead of you in this game. When you (the blue car in the middle) approach a curve, take the inside track and block any cars trying to pass you.



The gauges at the bottom of the screen indicate the punishment your car takes in a crash like this. To keep your car running smoothly, pay attention to the car's gas, body, tires, and engine. Be aware of your car's weak spots — and drive accordingly.



If you cross the finish line as one of the top three drivers, you receive enough prize money to visit the garage and fix any damage to your car. You might also have enough spare cash to purchase some helpful options.



After the race, check the results to see how you fared.

tight corners. The challenging combination of touchy steering and twisting tracks can make snap decisions life-threatening. But power steering (and practice) adds a few vital seconds to your planning.

However, there's no easy cure for the frustration you'll face when passing other cars. While swerving around a competitor, your car overreacts to the slightest touch on the directional pad. When this happens, you might slam into a wall and lose precious seconds catching up with the pack. Only the best drivers survive on all nine tracks — but those racers can start the next season with an even more powerful car.

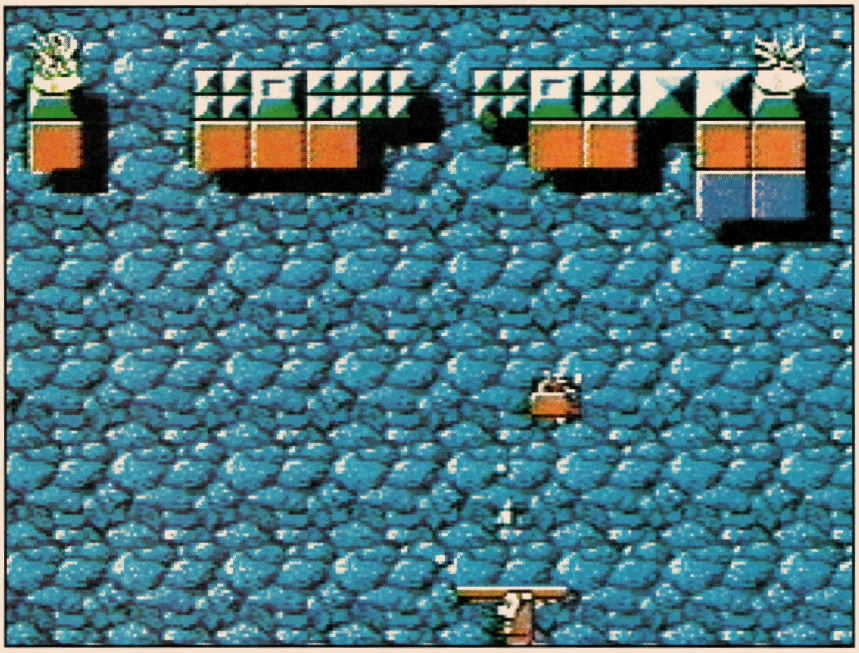
Super Cars wouldn't win a trophy if it were placed in competition with other NES racing games, but it wouldn't finish at the back of the pack, either. Although it includes some features of driving simulations — customizing your car, for one — elements such as being able to blast the competition with missiles remove it from the field of true simulations. Unless you're an avid racing fan, you'd better kick the tires on this game before you drive it home.

GP

Electro Brain
573 East 300 South; Salt Lake City, UT 84102

Thunder and Lightning

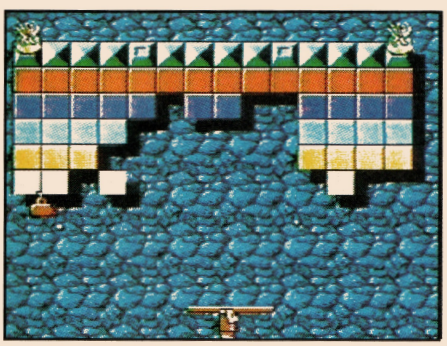
William R. Trotter



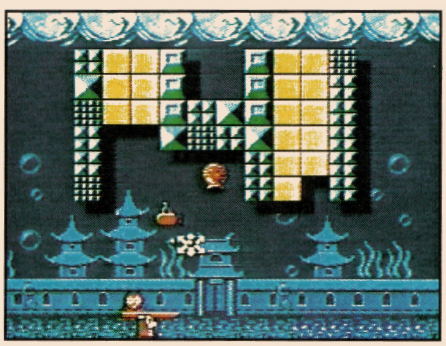
Sea anemones live on some of the walls. If they suck in one ball, they spit out two balls that are much smaller and harder to hit.

Of all the classics from the early days of home videogames, none was simpler or more addictive than *Breakout*, in which the player moved a paddle, smacked a ball, and tried to batter down walls of little colored blocks. The same ball-and-paddle idea was revived a few years ago in Taito's *Arkanoid* games. Now it appears yet again in Romstar's terrific *Thunder and Lightning*.

The star of this arcade game is rotund Mr. Chin, also the hero in *Mr. Chin's Gourmet Paradise* for Game Boy. Mr. Chin's never-ending quest for tasty delicacies has gotten him into trouble again in this new adventure. This time, he's disturbed the Thunderwarrior, who has imprisoned him behind the 30 Walls of Regret. Mr. Chin's only way out is to batter down all 30 walls in succession, armed with nothing but a stick and a ball.



The little red submarine carries the power-up icon. In this case, Mr. Chin's paddle has become extra long.



Try to avoid the octopus on level 2. If it lands on Mr. Chin's stick, it slows his movements.

What makes this game different from other *Breakout*-type games is the variety and novelty of its bonus features. Every few seconds, a power-up icon drifts across the screen, and if Mr. Chin hits it with his ball, he gains new powers: a longer stick, a slower rate of travel for the ball, multiple balls, a baseball glove to catch falling balls, extra-big balls that are easy to swat, and so on.

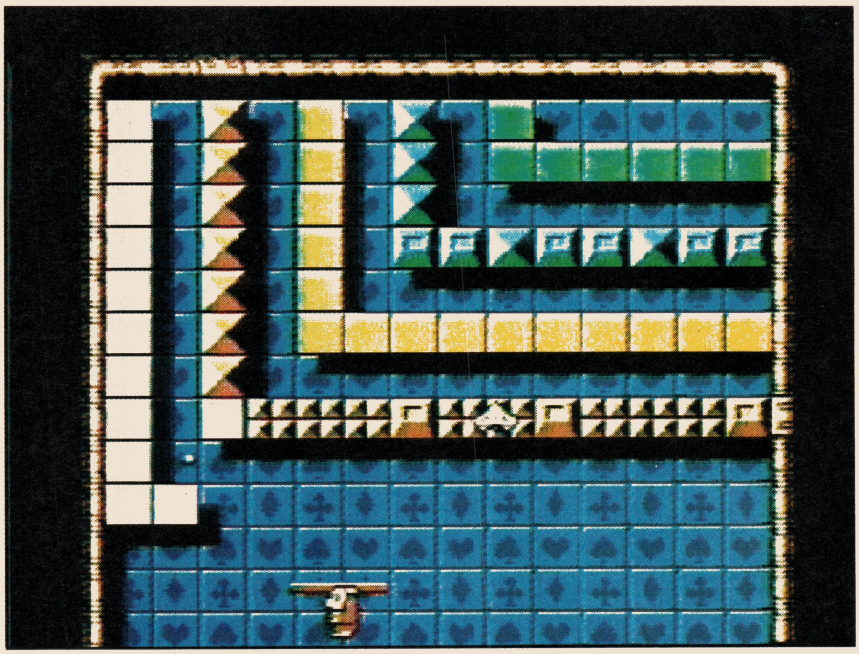
The most valuable power-ups are the three- and six-ball arrows. If you hit them, your original ball divides into either three or six balls, and as long as you manage to keep just one ball from falling out of play, all the others stay on the screen as well, bouncing wildly from side to side and tearing up the walls with great effect.

To make matters even more interesting, the arrangements of blocks within the various Walls of Regret are

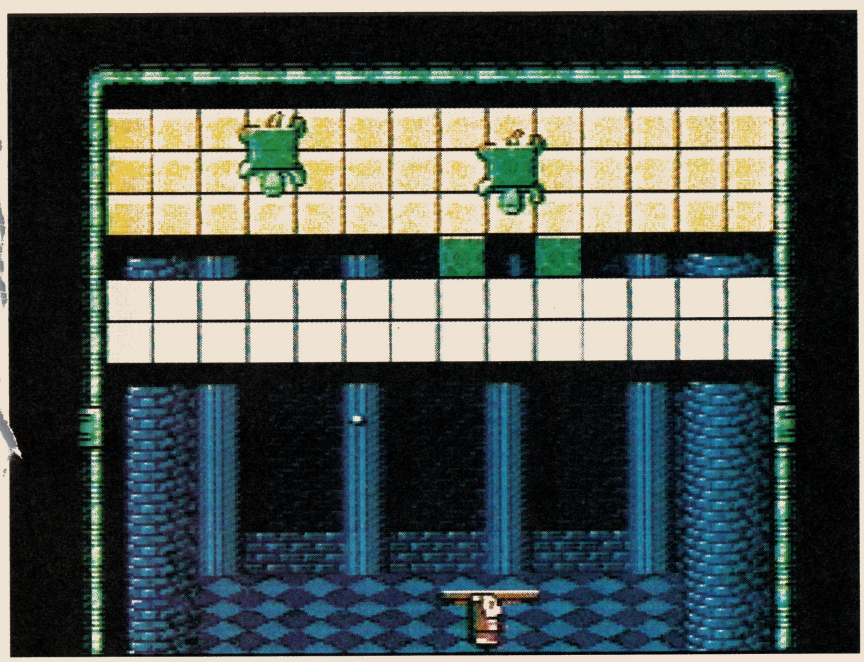
often decorated with strange creatures which also affect play. There are sea anemones which suck up one ball and spit out two smaller balls, and an octopus which attaches itself to Mr. Chin's stick and weighs it down.

If you enjoy this kind of fast-paced puzzle game, you'll find *Thunder and Lightning* a joy to play. It's lively and colorful, and something new and strange is always happening on-screen. Our only quibble is that you can't really aim shots. You can't get the degree of precision you could in *Arkanoid*, which often makes clearing some screens a matter of luck rather than skill.

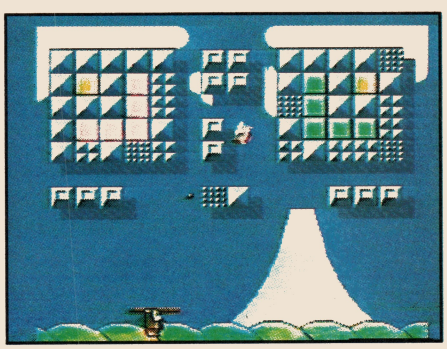
GP



Some of the walls are arranged in odd and challenging patterns, but the principle of clearing them always remains the same.



In some levels, turtles walk over the Walls of Regret and turn themselves into big green blocks, forcing you to shoot faster.



If you hit this bird, it flies out of control, smashing any part of the wall that's in its way as it tries to fly off-screen.

Romstar
22857 Lock Ness Avenue; Torrence, CA 90501

Zombie Nation

Brian Carroll

If you rescue 15 hostages, you've earned a smart bomb that can destroy *all* of the enemy characters on-screen.

How can you kill something that's already dead? That's the riddle you must solve in Meldac's *Zombie Nation*. Here's a hint: Use your head — or better yet, use the holographic head of Namakubi, leader of Japan's legendary samurai. After all, it's *his* head that spews bullets and smart bombs, both of which you're going to need to kill those zombies ... again.

The premise of *Zombie Nation* is predictably wacky. What was thought to be an ordinary meteorite crash-landed in the Nevada desert. But that astro-garbage turned out to be Darc Seed, an alien bent on transforming ordinary citizens into zombie slaves. And, as if New York City didn't have enough problems, Darc Seed has decided to rot the Big Apple first.

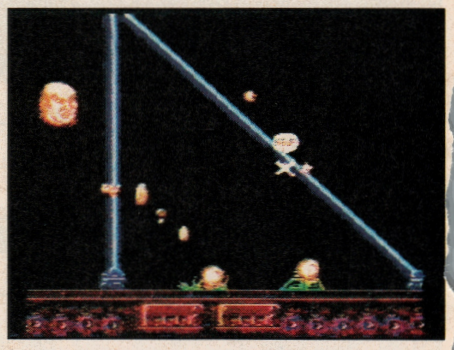
But wait, that's not the wacky part. There's more.

You're the pilot hero of the game. But just take a guess at what vehicle you get to fly. A time-traveling spaceship? A vintage World War I warplane? How about a helicopter gunship? Sorry — you're navigating the bust of Namakubi, instead. That's right, a head.

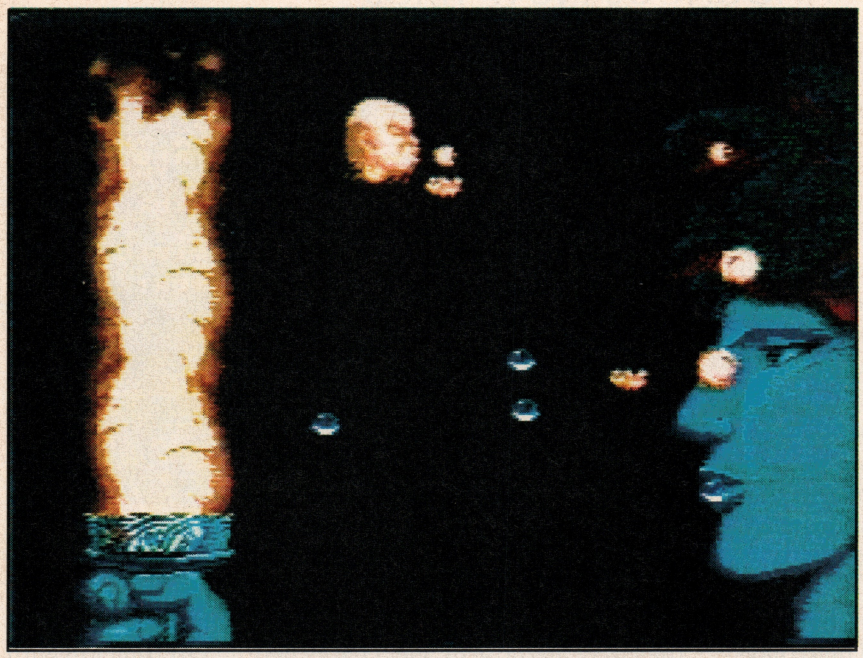
Translated from Japanese, "Namakubi" literally means "raw head." We're not sure why Namakubi is raw, but one thing is clear. Unless you can outmaneuver your attackers, your head *and* your goose are cooked.

In addition to New York City, three general locales across the United States serve as settings for the action. Each of these disparate areas consists of either one or two rounds. Although it's up to you to decide the order of stages, we recommend beginning in New York. The city is markedly easier to navigate than the others.

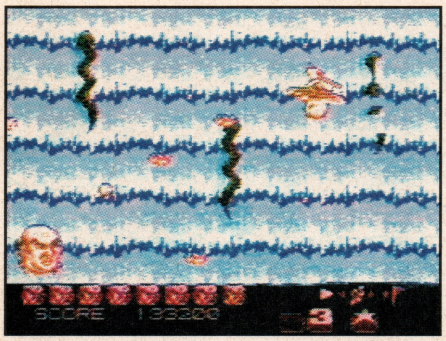
Remember, you have only five continues to complete all four stages — so you'd better make them count.



Look out for devastating obstacles such as this laser beam. One hit drains your life supply by more than ten percent.



Darc Seed has even empowered the Statue of Liberty to do his evil deeds. Fire directly into her face, while avoiding getting torched.



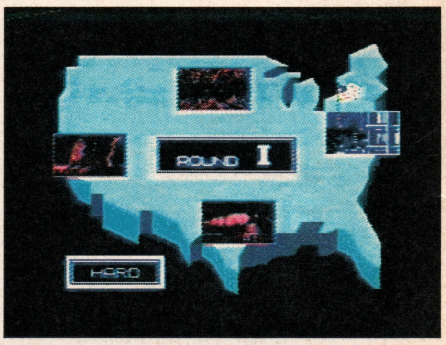
Be careful when traveling through water. The current pulls you toward the bottom of the screen.

Besides choosing your stage sequence and remembering the best possible routes for Namakubi's noggin to travel, you won't need your own noodle very much. You certainly won't use it as often as your trigger finger. This game is a hypersonic, scrolling shootout. To keep up, remember these two things: Shoot everything in sight, and avoid being shot by everything in sight.

You'll help your mission if you rescue any hostages that appear onscreen. If you free five captives, you double your firepower. If you rescue ten, your strength is tripled.

You're given five continue options before you must start over from scratch — and you'll need every one. Each stage has several unique threats that easily wipe out your weaponry. For example, the laser beams in New York deplete one-eighth of your life supply every time they strike you. Use the continues to scout these primary threats so you can make a cleaner run the next time through.

Zombie Nation is a mixed bag. Although some gamers will appreciate the unique concept — which is backed up with fairly solid game play — others will be disappointed with its lack of variety and challenge. And the graphics, while adequate, are less than dazzling. Use your head and think twice before buying this one.



Although you can complete the game in any order you wish, you might want to get your feet wet in New York first. Each of the four stages has either one or two sub-levels.

GP

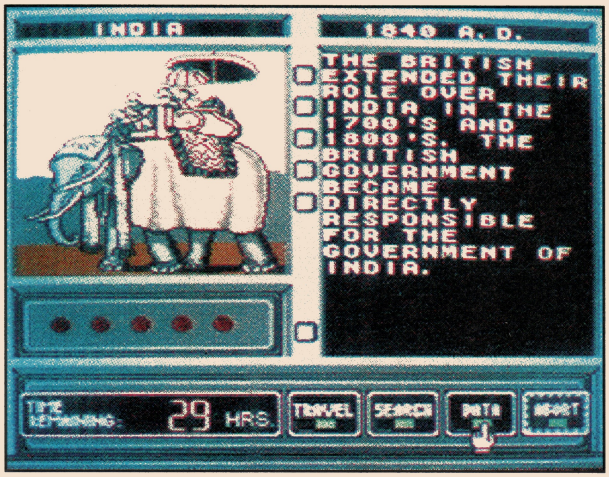
Meldac
1801 Century ParkEast; Suite 2210; Los Angeles, CA 90067

Konami Announces New Titles

The newest titles from **Konami/Ultra** include computer conversions, sequels, and TV translations.

Carmen Sandiego, a famous female thief, has been pursued on computers in schools and at home for years. But she's just made her first leap to videogames.

In *Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?*, players search for Carmen and her fellow crooks by traveling through 1,500 years of history. Historic objects in 48 locations have been swiped, and you must follow clues and chase the thieves in your time machine. The package, which will include a desktop encyclopedia, is scheduled for release this October.



Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?

Computer fans have long followed the adventures of King Graham and his family in the *King's Quest* series of games. The most recent game, *King's Quest V*, is the first to be translated to NES. In this non-linear game, you, as King Graham, must search a distant kingdom to find the wizard who has spirited away your castle — with your family still inside. A save feature and password option will help players with this large adventure, which should hit store shelves in January 1992.

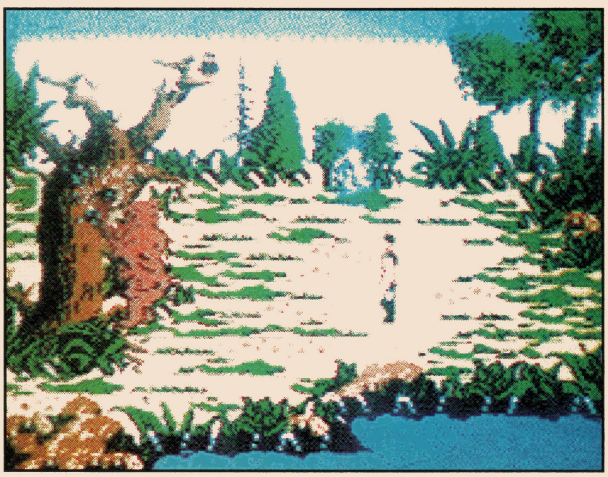
Contra fans can expect a different type of game from *Contra Force*. In this action game, you can choose to play as one of four characters of the force, and each fighter has unique weapons. Once your character is chosen, prepare to battle through five stages as you attempt to destroy a terrorist organization and to save the leader of the CIA. *Contra Force* is scheduled for release in December.

One of the most anxiously awaited games of the year should arrive by Christmas. In *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III*, the turtles must interrupt their jet surfboard vacation in Florida to head for Manhattan when April is kidnapped. Their return to New York is marked by sewer explorations and spaceship encounters.

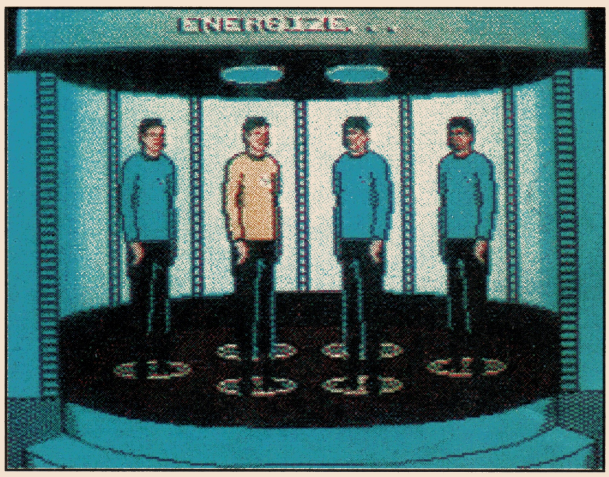
Speaking of spaceships, you can explore strange new worlds and seek out new life and new civilizations aboard the USS *Enterprise* in *Star Trek*. Scheduled to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the original "Star Trek" TV series, this game will be released in November.

In this galactic adventure, a warp experiment goes horribly wrong, and the *Enterprise* is thrown into deep, uncharted space. As Captain Kirk, you must search different planets for the dilithium crystals that will enable the *Enterprise* to return to Federation space.

On a lighter note, those animated characters from TV's top syndicated cartoon are the stars of *Tiny Toon Adventures*. Konami compares this game, scheduled for December release, to a Mario adventure. When Babs is kidnapped by Montana Max, it's up to Buster to rescue her. Luckily, he can ask Plucky, Dizzy Devil, or Furrball to help him in his six-level quest.



King's Quest V



Star Trek

Master Higgins Jumps to Game Boy

Master Higgins is up to his usual escapades in **Hudson Soft's** new Game Boy title, *Hudson's Adventure Island*. As in the NES games, Higgins is trying to rescue Princess Leilani from her monstrous kidnappers. As he roams the island, he finds weapons, special items, and helpful creatures by breaking eggs open. Fruit, vegetables, and milk restore Higgins's energy, but stay away from eggplant — he hates it.

On Adventure Island, Higgins must avoid many dangerous enemies, including snails, snakes, frogs, fish, bats, and pigs. But he's not without weapons — using his trusty stone axe, he can put enemies out of commission with a quick bonk on the head.

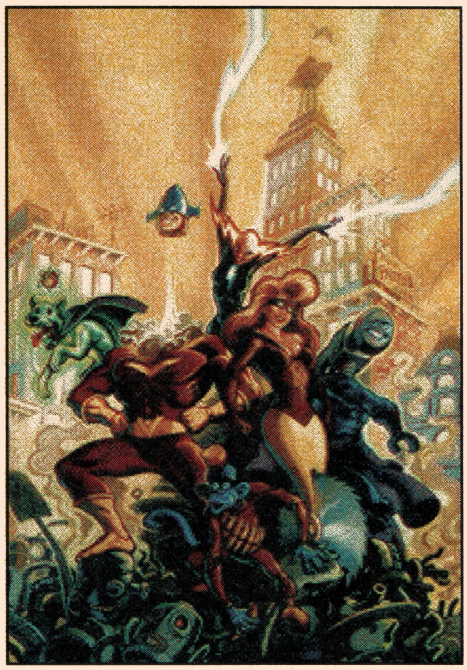
Slimy Superheroes

Dynatron City is not a place you'd like to visit — and you *certainly* wouldn't want to live there.

The site of Earth's first atomic-powered sewage treatment plant, Dynatron City has had a strange effect on the people who live nearby. They've turned into mutants! Luckily, they're good-hearted mutants and become a team of superheroes.

In *Defenders of Dynatron City*, you must help the gang — Jet Headstrong, Toolbox, Buzz-saw Girl, and the rest — defeat Dr. Mayhem and his radioactive henchmen.

Defenders of Dynatron City follows *Star Wars* as the second collaboration between **Lucasfilm** and **JVC**.



Protect innocent citizens amid toxic waste in *Defenders of Dynatron City*.

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GUIDELINES

PC Translations from Arcadia

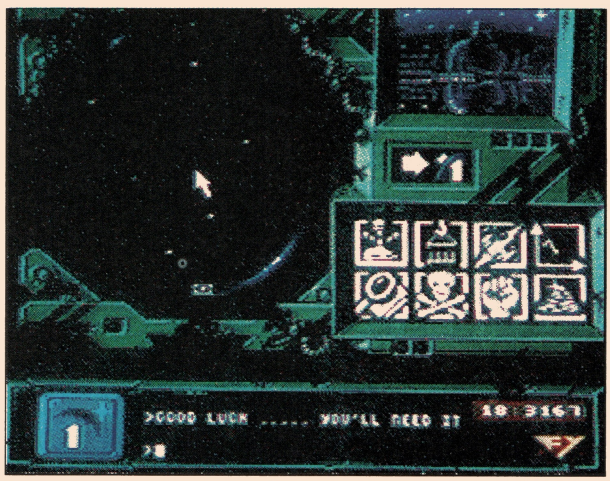
Arcadia has translated two computer games for the NES and Game Boy. In *Overlord*, a futuristic role-playing game, you're a mysterious traveller colonizing planets in a sparsely populated galaxy. As the galaxy's overlord, you train armies, raise money, build mining facilities, and grow and distribute food to your charges.

Your happy corner of the universe is threatened when an evil being trains an army of sinister soldiers. You and your colonies are forced into an epic struggle which can result in only one winner — and one overlord.

Prince of Persia, a puzzle-action game with remarkable animation, has been successfully converted for the Game Boy.

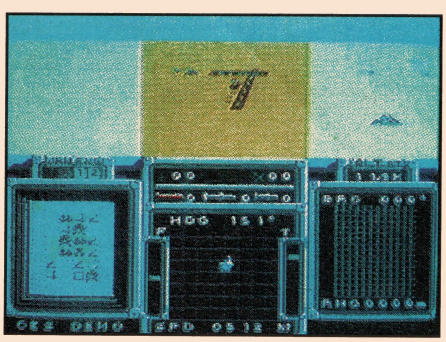
When the Princess of Persia refuses the advances of the Grand Vizier, she's thrown in prison and given an ultimatum: Marry the Grand Vizier within the hour, or die.

You're a young adventurer unjustly jailed by the Vizier's men. After escaping from your cell, you must scour the mazelike dungeon, facing puzzles, traps, unstable floors, and sword-wielding guards. You travel through 14 levels, each requiring climbing and jumping acrobatics. One false move, and you're a splotch on the dungeon floor. But if you're triumphant, you may win the princess's heart.



Choose a planet and begin your colonization in Arcadia's *Overlord*.

True Flight Simulator?



Gain air superiority with *F-15 Strike Eagle*.

MicroProse, a leading developer of computer entertainment software, is soaring into the Nintendo market with *F-15 Strike Eagle*, a translation of a popular computer flight simulator. *F-15 Strike Eagle* lets *you* decide where to fly in your 3-D environment. You can explore in all directions and not have to rely on the game's scrolling.

The flight characteristics of your jet promise enough power to perform loops and full rolls. You can fly either training flights or one of seven mission sorties. Skillful flying is rewarded with a chestful of Air Force medals.

Game Boy Productivity Update

As the Game Boy reaches more homes, designers scramble to develop new ways to use the portable machine. Soon, it won't be just for games anymore.

GameTek's InfoGenius, the first complete informational system for Game Boy, has expanded its software line. GameTek's recent agreement with **Microlytics** means that the InfoGenius's encyclopedia pak will use Random House's Time Line.

The Time Line is a 6,000-year chronology of Earth's history, arranged by time periods and seven topic headings — principal events, the Americas, religion and philosophy, literature, art and architecture, music, and science and technology.

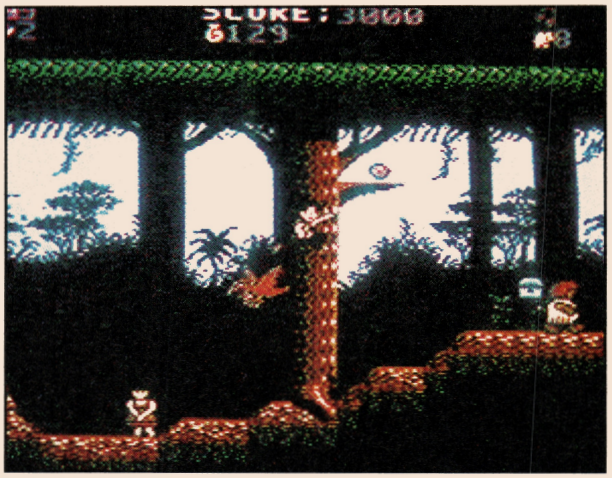
The InfoGenius is slated to go on sale in September — just in time for school reports and term papers.

Leeds Technology is also developing productivity software for the Game Boy. Its Workboy software promises to turn the Game Boy into a business and travel companion by including an international clock, temperature converter, telephone auto-dialer, language translator, and appointment diary. The system also includes an optional keyboard for entering information.

Fly Boy

Peter Pan, Tinkerbell, and the rest of the inhabitants of Never-Never Land won't ever grow up. Their days are spent in fun and games — until Captain Hook arrives on the island. Peter must rid the island of pirates and force Hook to walk his own gangplank.

Peter must clear three pirate-filled levels in *Fox's Peter Pan and the Pirates* (based on the Fox network,s cartoon) before his final showdown aboard Hook's ship, *The Jolly Roger*. Not only can Peter Pan fly in this **THQ** adventure, but he can also use swords, muskets, and cannons to rout the pesky swashbucklers. Of course, the pirates can try to sap Peter's strength with traps and in hand-to-hand combat. But Peter can regain energy by capturing treasure chests, caches of food, and the flighty fairy Tinkerbell.



Grab goodies and defeat enemies as you fly through *Fox's Peter Pan and the Pirates.*

Intrusive Flying

No one but a nut actually *wants* to be in Vietnam during 1972. The Gulf of Tonkin is no vacation resort. But jet pilot Jake "Cool Hands" Cribbon *is* a nut.

In **Mindscape's** *Flight of the Intruder*, you play Cribbon, piloting either an A-6 Intruder bomber or an F-4 Phantom II fighter. You fly 12 missions in this Vietnam War air-combat simulation, blasting away North Vietnamese pilots with heat-seeking missiles and machine guns, and evading them with skillful flying.

The Heads-Up Display (HUD) and complex cockpit instrumentation feed you the information you need to make it back to your carrier alive. But you have time to enjoy the flight — especially with *Flight of the Intruder's* multiple-flight perspectives, selective mission flight paths, and carrier take-offs and landings.

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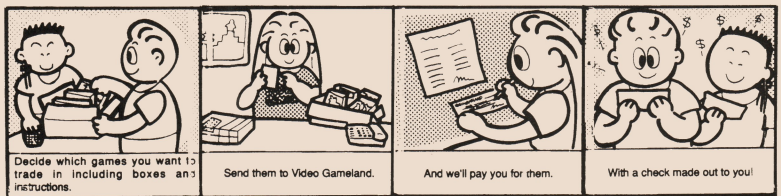

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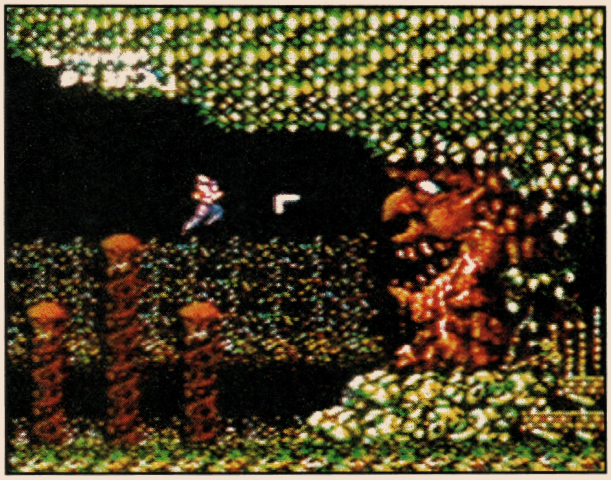
The Indian medicine man Wrathkon wasn't satisfied with the mystic gifts bestowed on him by the Great Spirit. So he turned to the powers of darkness. His angry tribesmen exiled him from the village, but Wrathkon had his revenge — he destroyed the village and captured the new medicine man, Haypavo. Only Mojavo, the sole surviving warrior, can stop Wrathkon before he absorbs Haypavo's supernatural energy.

Bandai's latest NES adventure, *Ultimate Journey*, takes you on a dangerous quest to Wrathkon's castle on Outcast Mountain. As Mojavo, you must crush strange foes and avoid evil magic. But remember — the Great Spirit smiles upon the brave.



Watch out for Wrathkon's carnivorous tree in *Ultimate Journey* — its bite is worse than his bark.

Technical Difficulties

By the year 2191, Earth is a paradise. The common chores of life are all handled by a Master Computer, and humans live a life of leisure. But the world's dependence on this hulk of microcircuits becomes apparent when alien invaders take the computer offline.

Powerless against the invaders, Earth's leaders put secret agent NOVA in charge of restoring the Master Computer to working order. NOVA is not only strong and cunning, but he's also skilled in the use of the Power Blade — a boomerang of incredible force and magic.

In **Taito's** *Power Blade* for Nintendo, you're NOVA, travelling through six data bases, battling guards and aliens, and trying to collect all the Master Computer's tape units. When you have all six tapes, you must enter the Master Computer Control Center and bring the computer back online. Earth's future depends on it.

A Prince of a Guy

It looks like the Sheriff of Nottingham is up to his old tricks. In **Arcadia's** new role-playing game, *Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves*, the sheriff has thrown Robin in prison and joined forces with Mortianna, a wicked witch. The two fiends take over England while King Richard the Lion-Hearted is fighting the Crusades. England is thrown into darkness and decay.

As Robin, you must escape from prison and free England from its paralyzing spell of evil. You, along with Maid Marian, Peter Dubois, Azeem, Little John, Wulf, Will Scarlett, and Friar Tuck, must find gold, arrows, and magical items that can help defeat the sheriff and Mortianna. You win important information and special objects as you interact with characters and search Sherwood Forest. And you can blow off steam with three different fighting modes — main-level combat, dueling, and melee.

Although *Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves* isn't *officially* based on this summer's movie starring Kevin Costner, the action closely follows that of the film.

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